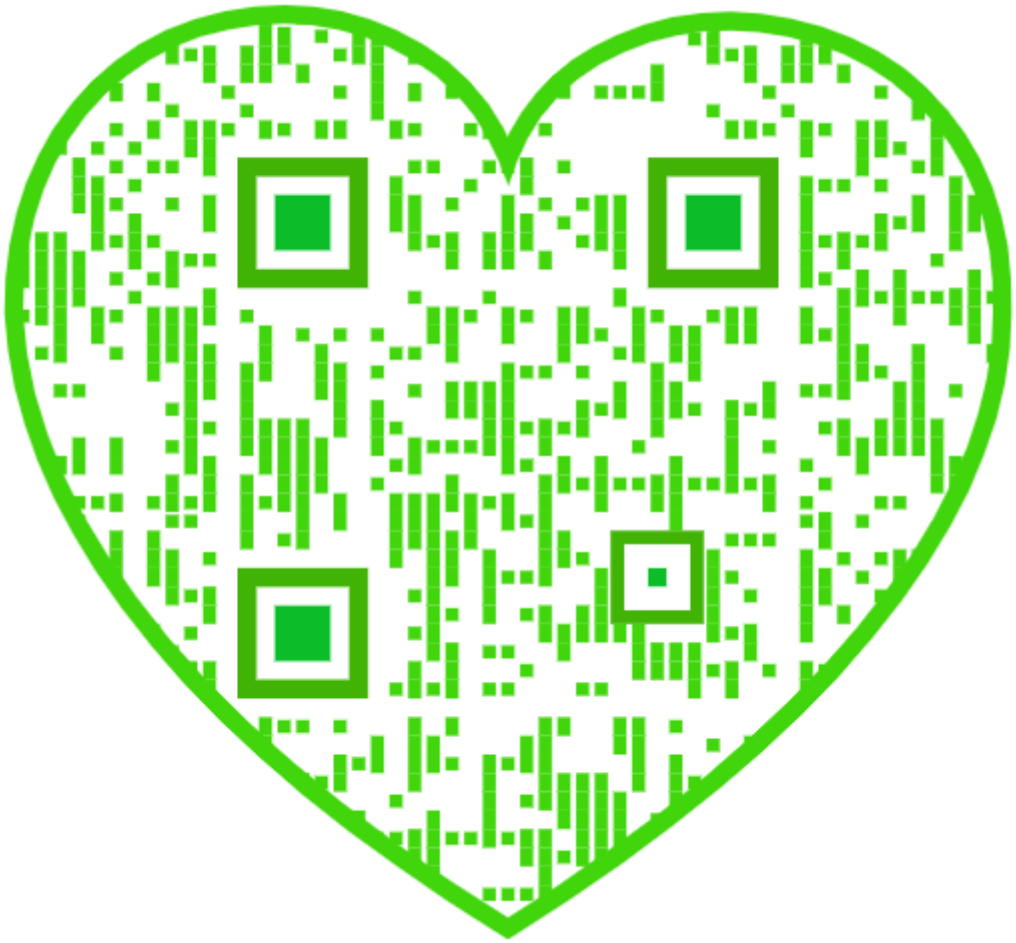

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John H. Romanes
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RUINS OF INCHCOLME ABBEY FROM THE SOUTH.

ABERDOUR AND INCHCOLME

BEING HISTORICAL NOTICES OF THE PARISH AND MONASTERY

IN TWELVE LECTURES

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM ROSS, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF 'BURGH LIFE IN DUNFERMLINE IN THE OLDEN TIME,' 'PASTORAL WORK IN THE COVENANTING TIMES,' 'BUSBY AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD,' ETC.

EDINBURGH: DAVID DOUGLAS

1885

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TO

WILLIAM HENRY GOOLD, D.D.

EDINBURGH

This Volume is inscribed

IN TOKEN OF THE AUTHOR'S RESPECT AND AFFECTION

AFTER A FRIENDSHIP WHICH BEGINNING AT

ABERDOUR

HAS DEEPENED WITH THE FLOW OF MORE THAN

THIRTY YEARS.

602356
ENGLISH LOCAL

PREFACE.

THE Lectures which compose this volume were written, chiefly as a relaxation from professional work, and delivered to the inhabitants of Aberdour more than twenty years ago. Designed for popular audiences, they are written in a simple, spoken style. They do not offer to the confirmed antiquary the minute details and constant reference to authorities which his habit of mind demands ; and to very grave people the little pleasantries which occur may appear trifling. But such readers will be good enough to bear in mind the audiences to whom the Lectures were originally adapted, and they may find that what lightened the task of listening to historical details has also made the reading of them more easy.

As regards the subjects with which the volume deals, it may be said, first of all, that this is the only attempt to give anything like a full account of the Monastery of Inchcolme, drawn mainly from its charters. To those who live in the neighbourhood of the ruins of the Abbey, whether on the Fife coast or the Midlothian shore of the Firth, the want of information regarding the old Religious House must

often have been felt. But great difficulties have lain in the way of providing this. The original Chartulary of the Abbey seems to be irrecoverably lost; and few can be expected to wade through the Macfarlane transcript of it in the Advocates' Library. The author had a copy of this MS. made, and through the kindness of the Hon. John Stuart, afterwards Earl of Moray, he got admission to the charter-room at Donibristle, which brought other valuable papers connected with the Monastery under his notice. He has also been at pains to consult every authority within his reach that was thought likely to give information on the subject. The most of these authorities, if not all, are named in the body of the Lectures, and it will be a matter of regret if any of them are omitted. To the author it seems most desirable that the information contained in the printed Chartularies, and even those still in manuscript, should be brought within the reach of the ordinary reading public. He has attempted to do this in the case of the MS. Chartulary of Inchcolme, but could wish that he had been more successful. He has endeavoured to reproduce the living past, in its broader and more important lines of thought and action, and has not forgotten that mere lumber, however ancient, is lumber still.

As regards the historical notices connected with Aberdour, the author can only hope that his old friends, the inhabitants of the village and parish, will derive some pleasure from the reading of this volume, and that his researches will do something to call

attention to a beautiful and interesting health resort, in which many of his happiest years were spent.

It may seem strange to some, that, in spite of many requests to give these Lectures to the public, so many years should have been allowed to elapse between their delivery and their publication. But occupied as the writer has been with busy pastoral work, in a health resort still more frequented than Aberdour, it has only been of late, when failing health has made an assistant necessary, that he has found leisure to prepare this volume for the press. This delay has, however, enabled him to add a number of facts, which make his account of the Monastery and the parish still more complete.

The author has only further to add that, amidst such a multiplicity of statements, stretching over so many years, it will not be thought wonderful if, in spite of all his care, some errors have crept into his book, and some important facts have been left unnoticed. And as regards the moralisings which are found in the Lectures, it has been his aim in all he has written, not only to exhibit the great natural beauty and the rich historical interest of the neighbourhood with which he has been dealing, but also to advance the cause of morality and religion.

BRIDGE OF ALLAN, *May* 1885.

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In this and subsequent lectures I am desirous of calling your attention to the leading historical incidents, of a civil, ecclesiastical, and social kind, which are connected with our village and its immediate neighbourhood, being of opinion that much that is fitted to be instructive, as well as interesting, is to be found in such local notices.

When I first came among you, a perfect stranger to the neighbourhood, I could not help being greatly struck with its singular beauty. But when I had gazed and admired, I naturally began to put the questions to myself—What of the history of this place? What events, of an important or interesting kind, have taken place in it, or near it? What associations are connected with that venerable pile, the old castle? What memories linger around the old church,

which stands in so secluded and picturesque a spot, and of which the trees have begun to take possession, now that the worshippers have, for so many years, forsaken it? What historical incidents are there, belonging to the noble house of Morton, on the one hand, and of Moray, on the other? What incidents of an interesting kind are there associated with the village itself? How long has the smoke curled over its roofs; and children, in groups, played on its door-steps; and the hum of industry been heard in its streets? What have the fortunes of the village been, in earlier and later times, during seasons of peace and war? What are the legends that are told around its firesides on winter evenings? What notable men—nobles or ecclesiastics, soldiers or sailors—have been connected with the place? What men noted for their virtues have lived in it; and, leaving their names inscribed on the mouldering tombstones of its churchyards, have at the same time left their worth imprinted on the memories and hearts of the villagers?

These, and a hundred other questions, naturally suggested themselves; and to very few of them, as you may well suppose, could I at first give a satisfactory answer. Snatches of old ballads, read in early days—ballads which tell of 'Sir Patrick Spens' and the 'Bonny Earl of Murray'—were no doubt recalled to memory; and, along with these, historical recollections of the 'Good Regent,' and that other, of very different mould, who pronounced the panegyric over the grave of Knox: 'There lies one who never feared the face of man!' But all else was to learn.

From that time to this, I have, as occasion has offered, been quietly learning the history of the place; and I am here to-night to share with you what I have learned. When I thus speak, it is of course implied that I believe I have something to tell which is not generally known. Indeed, I cannot help wondering that so little seems to be known

regarding the history of Aberdour and its neighbourhood. I cannot attribute this to any want of interest in their native place, or any want of intelligence, on the part of the inhabitants. It is rather to be traced to the difficulty of getting at the sources of information. For it has to be confessed that the history of Aberdour has yet to be written, and, indeed, has hardly been touched. There are no doubt such notices of it as give excursionists all the information they may care to have. There are notices in Gazetteers, which are meagre enough, and not over correct in the information they do give. There are the two Statistical Accounts. But the old one, though very good in a strictly statistical point of view, does not enter at all on the antiquities of the parish; and the new one is little better than an abridgment of the old, adapted to a later time. In Sibbald's *History of Fife* the whole notices of Aberdour are comprised within a page or two; and the letterpress of Swan's *Views of Fife* leaves untouched some of the most interesting features of its history.

What, then, it may be asked, are the authorities from which I have drawn my materials? In the earliest part of the history I have gone to the MS. Register of Inchcolme, the printed Morton Papers, and the charters and other valuable documents lying in the charter-room at Donibristle—to which, through the kindness of the Hon. John Stuart, afterwards eleventh Earl of Moray, I have been allowed access. From these sources I have got information which is not to be found in either the earlier or later printed histories of our country. And as regards the later part of the history, I have carefully examined the Kirk-Session records of the parish, which, through the courtesy of the Rev. George Roddick, I have for a considerable time had in my possession. In addition to these authorities, I have had many charters and papers of various kinds put into my hands by the feuars and other inhabitants of the village. Another source of information, regarding local

matters, it would be ungrateful in me not to mention. It is pointed out in the lines of Allan Cunningham—

> Much with hoary men
> He walked conversing, and sedately glad,
> Heard stories which escaped historic pen.

A single remark more, and these preliminary statements, already too long, are at an end. I wish it to be distinctly understood that the historical notices of Aberdour and its neighbourhood, which I am to lay before you, in this and other lectures, do not pretend to be exhaustive. More information than I now have, and more leisure than I can command, would be necessary ere anything having the least claim to be an exhaustive history could be produced. Moreover, I do not keep by a rigid order of a chronological kind; indeed, in some instances it will be seen that the order of acquiring my information determines the order of my narration. On the present occasion I do little more than look at the history of the village, as that is reflected from the history of its ancient and now ruined Castle.

Aberdour, as the most of you are probably aware, derives its name from the little stream, the Dour, that runs between the Easter and Wester villages, and falls into the Firth of Forth at the harbour. The prefix, *Aber*, signifies the mouth of a stream; and it is generally coupled with the name of the stream whose outlet to the sea, or confluence with another stream, is pointed out. Thus the name Aberdour signifies the mouth of the Dour; and as *Dour* means water, the name, reduced to its ultimate elements, means the mouth of the water. Both parts of the word are undoubtedly Celtic, and by many held to be Cymric or British. I need hardly say that names of places in Scotland of which this can be truly said are very old; and the first notices of Aberdour carry us back to a very remote antiquity indeed.

Situated on the southern shore of Fife, one of the seven

provinces of the ancient Pictavia, or Pictland, one might naturally expect to find some notices of it in the *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, but this expectation, I regret to say, has not been realised. The earliest notice of the place, so far as I know, is to be found in the Chartulary of Inchcolme. There, in a Bull of Pope Alexander the Third, of the year 1178, mention is made of the church of Aberdour. And as the mills of Aberdour are mentioned soon afterwards, we may believe that the village, in some form or other, existed as early as the twelfth century. One would like to travel still further back, and inquire if anything definite is known of the neighbourhood during the occupation of the country by the Romans, or during the period between the time of their departure and the twelfth century. Of these periods not much bearing on the neighbourhood can with certainty be said. We learn something regarding the condition of the early inhabitants of the country from the weapons of war, or of the chase, which have been found imbedded in the soil. The Rev. Robert Liston, in the Old Statistical Account of the parish, speaks of such weapons, in the form of axes, hatchets, and spear- and arrow-heads, made of flint and other hard kinds of stone, having been found in his time on a farm in the neighbourhood. That farm I know to be Dalachy; but the weapons alluded to, as well as some stone coffins found about the same time, have long ago disappeared.

Sir Robert Sibbald, after a careful consideration of all the facts which have come down to us regarding the ports in Fife which the Romans made use of, has concluded that Aberdour was one of them. How interesting it would be to have a view of the country around us as it then appeared! The great natural features of the landscape would, of course, be the same as now: the Binn lying like a huge sleeping elephant; Dunearn Hill, shooting up its head, as if keeping watch over the scene; the Firth, studded with its islands, glittering in the morning sun, as if every wave were floating

unnumbered diamonds on to the beach; Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, and the Castle Rock of Edinburgh—a mere hill-fort then, we may presume—keeping watch and ward on the opposite coast; while the bold and beautiful line of the Pentlands shuts in the landscape on the south-west with a mountain wall. But strange-looking galleys are in the bay; the strange accents of Roman and other tongues cleave the air; and a few rude huts near the beach are probably all that represent our village. The Roman invasion was, in its results, manifestly beneficial to our country. It brought its rude and hardy tribes into contact with civilisation of a certain kind; and, what is better still, it opened up a way for the pioneers of Christianity. What we know of these pioneers and their labours in the kingdom of the Picts, especially along its southern boundary, laved by the waters of the Forth, must be told in another connection.

It is time for us to come to a later period, and more definite information regarding our village. And in order that historical personages and events may be associated with definite places, let me ask you to accompany me in thought to our old Castle. This is by far the most ancient building in our immediate neighbourhood. A single glance shows that the site it occupies is one of great strength, defended as it is by the little valley of the Dour on the west, north-west, and south-west; and a steep declivity, that bends away down to the Firth, on the south and south-east. The position, moreover, is one of great beauty, commanding a delightful view of the Firth, with its winding shores, its jutting promontories, its deeply indented bays, and its picturesque islands, which gleam 'like emeralds chased in gold.' At this date it is difficult to form an accurate idea of the appearance presented by the Castle in its better days, before additions, out of keeping with its original form, had been made to it, and ere the tooth of time had gnawed its earliest masonry down to its present

state of abject and hopeless ruin. For, the present pile, I need hardly say, is not all of the same age. The original castle, which is the westernmost part, was a huge square keep, of very great strength. And one can easily imagine, from what remains of it, how it must have looked, towering over the little valley of the Dour in solid massive strength —its barbican wall stretching away to the east—and scowling defiance at the invader. The description of Crichton Castle, as given in *Marmion*, is strikingly suggestive of the appearance of our old baronial keep :—

> The castle rises on the steep
> Of the green vale of Tyne,
> And far beneath, where slow they creep
> From pool to eddy dark and deep,
> Where alders moist and willows weep,
> You hear her streams repine.
>
> The towers in different ages rose,
> Their various architecture shows
> The builders' various hands.
> A mighty mass, that could oppose
> When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
> The vengeful Douglas bands.

If in this description we substitute the Dour for the Tyne, and make the Douglases the defenders and not the invaders of the keep, we have a wonderfully accurate description of the site and general appearance of our old Castle, as well as a note of its owners, through many centuries.

There have been, apparently, three several additions made to the original castle, on its eastern side; and appearances favour the idea that some addition may have been made on its western side, too. From initials which are still to be seen over the window of the easternmost part of the building, it appears that this portion was added by William, the eighth Earl of Morton. The date, 1635, is to be seen on a sun-dial built into the south wall; and the

same date, I have been assured, was to be observed, not many years ago, above one of the windows. These dates confirm the supposition that this part was erected by Earl William, of whom we shall have more to say at a later stage. No one who examines it with any degree of care can fail to be struck with its highly-finished masonry; and, as Billings has remarked, the change that took place, in the seventeenth century, from Gothic forms to the unbroken lines of Italian architecture, is here very distinctly indicated. This part of the Castle buildings is associated, in the minds of some of the older people of the village, with stories of school-boy days. The gallery, as the upper story is called, was used as a school before the present parish school was built; and at an earlier time a troop of horse, under the command of Lord Morton, had their quarters here. The original keep is wellnigh, but not exactly, square. Its walls are strong and massive, and bear every mark of a hoary antiquity. Time and long-continued neglect, on the part of those who own it, are however gradually working its destruction. Some of my audience will remember that a large portion of the north and west walls fell, during the night, in the midst of a thunderstorm, in the year 1844, the noise of the fall being so loud as to awaken and alarm the inhabitants of the easter village. Great masses of the fallen masonry are still to be seen, the mortar binding the stones as with bands of iron.

It is difficult to speak with certainty as to the precise age of the venerable pile. That a castle stood here long before the Douglases became the proprietors of the lands and barony of Aberdour is undoubted. That the oldest part of the present Castle was that in which the Viponts and Mortimers—the first barons of Aberdour of whom we have any knowledge—successively had their abode, is exceedingly likely. But in the absence of conclusive evidence it would be rash to make the assertion. On the supposition that it was built by the Viponts, the building

must be somewhere about seven hundred years old. The Viponts are believed to have been of Norman extraction, and to have settled in Scotland early in the twelfth century. About that time they possessed the lands of Aberdour, and they had extensive estates in other parts of Scotland, as various chartularies prove. I have read somewhere that the fishermen of the Forth used to chant a song to the beat of their oars, every verse of which ended with the refrain—

> The leal gudeman of Aberdour
> Sits in Sir Alan Vipont's tower.

Nisbet, in his *Heraldry*, tells us that as early as the year 1126, the second year of the reign of David the First, the lands and barony of Aberdour passed into the hands of Sir Alan de Mortimer, who married Anicea, the daughter of Sir John Vipont. The Viponts were a brave and warlike family. One of them, Sir William, fell on the field of Bannockburn, contending nobly for the independence of Scotland; and another of them, Sir Alan, valiantly defended the Castle of Lochleven against the English during the reign of David the Second. It is pleasing to have the name of Vipont so intimately connected with Aberdour. Sir Walter Scott has made a member of the family one of the heroes of his matchless tales; and James Grant has made Roland Vipont represent the last of the noble race, in the story of *Jane Seton.*

The Mortimers, who, as we have seen, acquired the castle and lands of Aberdour by the marriage of Sir Alan with the daughter of Sir John Vipont, are frequently spoken of in history by the surname of *de Mortuo Mari*, as the Viponts are under the Latinised form *de Vetere Ponte.* The Mortimers, like the Viponts, are understood to have been of Norman extraction; both took part in the Crusades; and indeed the Mortimers seem to have got their family name from some deed of valour performed near the Dead

Sea. We have not many notices of the Mortimers and their possessions in those old days, when, as David Vedder sings—

> The morning's e'e saw mirth and glee
> In the hoary feudal tower
> Of bauld Sir Alan Mortimer,
> The Lord of Aberdour.

Sir Robert Sibbald tells us that Sir Alan gave the half of the lands of his town of Aberdour to God and the monks of St. Colme's Inch, for the benefit of a burial-place for himself and his posterity in the church of the monastery. Of this somewhat apocryphal story we shall, however, have something to say at a later stage. At present all that needs to be said regarding the matter is, that Sir Alan apparently did not get the benefit of the kind of burial for which he had stipulated; for, as Sibbald tells the story, 'Sir Alan being dead, the monks carrying his corpse in a coffin of lead, by barge, in the night-time, to be interred within the church, some wicked monks did throw the samen [same] in a great deep betwixt the land and the monastery, which, to this day, by the neighbouring fishing men and salters, is called "Mortimer's Deep."'

We have seen that there were brave soldiers in those early days connected with Aberdour; and we may venture to put in our claim for at least one brave sailor, although not belonging to any family who owned its castle or lands. Who of us has not read with delight in boyhood's days, and with scarcely abated interest in maturer years, 'the grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spens,' as Coleridge has termed it? Its authorship and the date of its composition are alike unknown, although some believe it to be comparatively modern, and the work of the authoress of 'Hardyknute,' Lady Wardlaw of Pitreavie. There are several versions of the ballad of Sir Patrick Spens, some of which evidently connect it with the period of King Alexander the

Third. That period was one which was noted for great prosperity to Scotland; but the King's untimely death plunged the nation into deep sorrow, and the wars to which the question of the succession to the Crown gave rise rolled a tide of fire over the land. Alexander's son, who bore the same name, was dead; and so was his daughter Margaret, who had been married to Eric, king of Norway, and had left behind her a newly-born child, known as 'the Maid of Norway.' It had been resolved that, in the event of no other children being born to King Alexander, the crown should go to the Maid of Norway. But disaster followed on the heels of disaster. King Alexander was killed by falling over the cliffs at Kinghorn, and the youthful queen died at Orkney, on her way to Scotland; for at that time, I need hardly remind you, Orkney was no part of the realm of Scotland. It is difficult to fit the story of the ballad of 'Sir Patrick Spens' into the history of the time; for, so far as I am aware, there is no historical notice of a shipwreck connected either with the return voyage of those who conveyed the daughter of King Alexander to Norway, or with the voyage of those who conveyed his granddaughter to Orkney. But that the ballad has reference to one or other of these occasions is undoubted; and as King Alexander is spoken of as being alive when the voyage to Norway took place, we must conclude, either that the ballad relates to the former of the events I have referred to, or that a very considerable poetical licence has been taken by its author. King Alexander is represented as sitting in his tower of Dunfermline, then a royal residence; and to the inquiry what captain could be got skilful and trusty enough to undertake the voyage to Norway, an ancient knight exclaims that no better sailor than Sir Patrick Spens is to be found in all the land. Sir Patrick was accordingly sent. But the voyage was made at a stormy season, and although he and his crew reached Norway in safety, they returned to

Scotland no more. The following is the best version of the ballad :—

The King sits in Dunfermline tower,
Drinking the bluid-red wine,
'O whaur will I get a skeely skipper,
To sail this new ship o' mine?'

O up and spake an eldern knight,
Sat at the King's right knee,
'Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That ever sailed the sea.'

The King has written a braid letter,
And sealed it with his hand;
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

'To Noroway! to Noroway!
To Noroway on the faem!
The King's daughter, of Noroway,
'Tis thou maun bring her hame.'

The first word that Sir Patrick read,
Fu' loud, loud laughèd he,
The neist word that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his e'e.

'O wha is he has dune this deed,
And tauld the King o' me;
To send us out, at this time o' the year,
To sail upon the sea?

'Be it wind, be it weet, be it hail, be it sleet,
Our ship maun sail the faem;
The King's daughter, o' Noroway,
'Tis we must fetch her hame.'

They hoysed their sails on Mononday morn,
Wi' a' the speed they may;
They hae landed in Noroway
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week,
In Noroway but twae,
Whan that the lords o' Noroway
Began aloud to say—

For an explanation of this expression see the ... in Scott's ... entitled "Old ... 49 suits which he had he never lost one

'Ye Scottishmen spend a' our King's gowd,
And a' our Queenis fee.'
'Ye lee! ye lee! ye leers loud,
Fu' loudly do ye lee!

For I brocht as much white monie
As gane my men and me,
An' I brocht a half-fou o' red gude gowd
Out ower the sea wi' me.

Make ready, make ready, my merry men a',
Our gude ship sails the morn.'
'Now, ever alake, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm!

I saw the new moon late yestreen,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm;
And if ye gang to sea, master,
I fear we 'll come to harm.'

They hadna sailed a league, a league,
A league but only three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind grew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the top-masts lap,
It was sic a deadly storm;
And the waves cam' o'er the broken ship
Till a' her sides were torn.

'O where will I get a gude sailor
To tak' my helm in hand,
Till I get up to the tall top-mast,
To see if I can spy land?'

'O here am I, a sailor gude,
To take the helm in hand
Till you go up to the tall top-mast;
But I fear you 'll ne'er spy land.'

He hadna gane a step, a step,
A step but only ane,
When a bout flew out o' our goodly ship,
And the salt sea it came in.

'Gae fetch a web o' the silken claith,
And anither o' the twine,
And wap them into our ship's side,
An' letna the sea come in.'

O laith, laith were our gude Scots lords
To weet their cork-heeled shune ;
But lang or a' the play was played
They wat their hats abune.

And mony was the feather-bed
That flattered on the faem ;
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair cam' hame.

The ladies wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair ;
A' for the sake o' their true luves,
For them they 'll ne'er see mair.

O lang, lang may the ladies sit
Wi' their face into their hand
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand.

And lang, lang may the maidens sit
Wi' their gowd kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear luves,
For them they 'll see nae mair.

Half ower, half ower to Aberdour,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

The version given by Sir Walter Scott in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and by Motherwell in his collection of ballads, has the last verse thus—

O forty miles aff Aberdeen
'Tis fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

This seems tame, compared with the other version. It

may indeed be objected that we, who are connected with Aberdour, are hardly to be considered unprejudiced judges in such a matter. But this cannot fairly be said of Dr. Robert Chambers, who has given his opinion in the following words:—'I think it extremely probable that Sir Patrick Spens lived near the little port of Aberdour, which port might then have been in use as a sort of haven for Dunfermline, from which it is not far distant. In the last verse of the ballad, the shipwreck is described as taking place half-way back from Norway to Aberdour; and it is certainly a likely circumstance that the ship was destined to the same port from which she set out.' As adding greatly to the probability of this theory, he mentions the fact of the existence of an extremely fine tract of hard white sand, to the east of Aberdour, which is commonly called 'the White Sands;' and this, he thinks, is 'the strand' referred to in the third verse of the ballad.[1]

Bishop Percy, in his *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, also gives 'Aberdour,' in the closing verse of his short version of the ballad; and he appends two notes to it, which connect themselves, in an interesting way, both with Aberdour and Lady Wardlaw, to whom I have lately referred. He speaks of our village as 'lying upon the river Forth, the entrance to which is sometimes denominated *De mortuo Mari.*' The good Bishop seems to think this a connecting-link between the place and the shipwreck

[1] The verse quoted on last page is not the only instance in which *Aberdeen* has usurped the place of *Aberdour*. In the *Songstresses of Scotland*, by Sarah Tytler and J. L. Watson, the following passage occurs in the notice of Joanna Baillie (page 251):—'In a third letter the author of the *Cottagers of Glenburnie* vows that the next time the author of the *Plays of the Passions* visits Scotland, she will insist on taking her to Aberdeen, quoting an anecdote of an old gentleman who had travelled twice through Europe, and had never seen anything to be compared to Aberdeen, but the bay of Naples. Mrs. Hamilton prophesies that if Walter Scott would open the cry about Aberdeen, as he has done about Loch Katrine, scenery, how the world would be deafened by reiterated praises!' In every instance *Aberdeen* has here been put by mistake for *Aberdour!*

of Sir Patrick Spens,' not knowing the incident which gave rise to the name of 'Mortimer's Deep.'

His note in reference to the author of 'Hardyknute' is also very interesting. Apparently unaware of the fact that Lady Wardlaw was the authoress of 'Hardyknute,' and suspected of being also the authoress of 'Sir Patrick Spens,' he says:—'An ingenious friend thinks the author of "Hardyknute" has borrowed several expressions and sentiments from the foregoing [Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens], and other old Scottish songs in this Collection.' If Lady Wardlaw was the authoress of both ballads, there is another and simpler way of accounting for the similarity of expressions and sentiments contained in them.

Returning from what may seem a digression, we have something more to say regarding our old Castle. It is not because of any dearth of heroes connected with Aberdour that I have turned your attention to the somewhat shadowy form of Sir Patrick Spens. We have already seen the link that binds the names of Vipont and Mortimer to the place; and now another name appears, to which even these must yield the palm. Who that has read the history of the noble contendings of our countrymen during that eventful period which followed the mournful death of Alexander the Third, and called into the field Wallace and Bruce, and the noble band of patriots who fought under their banners, can have forgotten the name of Randolph, Earl of Moray! When Wallace had stirred the souls of all true-hearted Scottishmen to their very depths in favour of liberty, and the just independence of their country, in spite of the arrogant claims of Edward of England, the younger Bruce, aided by his two noble friends and compatriots—Randolph and the Black Douglas—led his countrymen on to victory, and immortalised not only himself, but his companions and their country, by the glorious enterprise. That Aberdour can claim some connection, although remote, with 'the good Sir James Douglas,' as his countrymen long delighted

to call him, is well known to all of you, the noble family of Morton being a branch of the Douglas line. But probably no one now listening to me has heard of any connecting link between our village and Randolph. A short time ago I as little dreamt of this as any of you; and it was with a thrill of delight, as well as surprise, that I found among the Morton papers a charter that put it beyond all question that the barony of Aberdour belonged to Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, more than five hundred years ago. How much does this simple fact increase the interest we naturally have in the neighbourhood in which we live; and also the interest which, apart from this association, we might naturally take in the gallant warrior and wise statesman! Strange as it may appear to some minds that are less under the spell of local associations than we are, we now read with greatly intensified interest the exploits of the old soldier—the nephew of King Robert the Bruce. We enter with greater eagerness into the history of his early imprisonment in England, his recapture of Edinburgh Castle from the Southern invader, his brave conduct at Bannockburn, where he commanded the left wing of the Scottish army, and the wise and energetic measures he employed, as Guardian of Scotland during the minority of David the Second.

Randolph and the good Sir James Douglas were warmly and generously attached to each other, as only great and kindred spirits can be; and they were both unflinching and unwearied in their defence of their master, the Bruce. You must often have heard the story how the Bruce, feeling himself near his end, summoned Sir James to his dying couch, and charged him to convey his heart to the Holy Land, and bury it as near the sepulchre of the Saviour as he could; and how the Douglas, when his sovereign had breathed his last, got his heart embalmed, and put into a silver casket, which he hung round his neck with a silver chain, as he set out to fulfil his friend's dying request.

There is something romantic in the story of that journey, and something truly pathetic in Douglas's end. On his way to Jerusalem he passed through Spain, and became entangled in a fight with the Saracens. Seeing, near the close of the battle, one of the knights who followed him surrounded by the Moors, he took the casket in which the Bruce's heart lay, and, casting it into the thick of the fight, exclaimed, 'On, heart! as thou wert wont, and Douglas will follow thee, or die.' And, like a true warrior, he followed it, and died, trying to rescue a friend from death. The body of Douglas, along with the casket, was brought back to Scotland, and the Bruce's heart was buried in Melrose Abbey by Randolph, Earl of Moray and Lord of Aberdour.

There is an act of devotion on the part of Randolph to his uncle, the Bruce, recorded in the Morton papers, and also in the Chartulary of Dunfermline, which no historian, so far as I am aware, has noticed. In common with his countrymen of that period, Randolph believed in the efficacy of prayers for the dead. This was one of the doctrines, as Hallam tells us in his *History of the Middle Ages*, which appear to have been either introduced, or sedulously promoted, for the purposes of sordid fraud. But it is too much to expect that a soldier like Randolph should have been above the prejudices of his time, in a matter of this kind. And there is great interest in the fact that he made over to the monks of the Abbey of Dunfermline the lands of Culhelach—now known as Cullelo, and at that time forming part of the barony of Aberdour—with the view of securing prayers for the soul of his dear uncle, King Robert the Bruce, and the souls of his ancestors and successors. And we learn further from the Chartulary of Dunfermline that he gave the lands of Bandrum and Kinedder, in the parish of Saline, for a similar service to be done to himself. It is a singular thing that after the earldom of Moray has passed through so many hands—the

Dunbars, the Douglases, the Crichtons, the Gordons, and three different families of Stewarts—the lands of Cullelo should again be in the possession of an Earl of Moray. It is also an interesting fact that the ancestor of an ancient family in our neighbourhood—the Moubrays of Cockairnie and Otterston—was a companion-in-arms of the brave Randolph. At the battle of Bannockburn the Castle of Stirling was held, in the interest of King Edward of England, by Sir Philip de Moubray. After that decisive battle, however, Sir Philip cast his fortunes into the same scale with those of Scotland; and he fell at the battle of Dundalk, bravely fighting by the side of Edward Bruce and Randolph, Earl of Moray.

Randolph died very suddenly at Musselburgh in the year 1332, not without the suspicion of having been poisoned by an English monk, as Father Hay himself relates; and he was universally lamented as an incorruptible Regent, a brave soldier, a wise statesman, and a noble-hearted man. He lies buried in the Abbey of Dunfermline beside his uncle, the Bruce, whom he served so faithfully and loved so well. Sir Walter Scott thinks it not unlikely that the pathetic ballad, 'Lord Randal, my son,' may have been written in connection with the melancholy end of Randolph. The evident youth of the victim in the ballad makes this, in our view, unlikely. But which of us has not felt what an amount of simple pathos there is in the closing lines of the ballad, in which, in reply to his mother's fears that he has been poisoned, Lord Randal says—

> 'O yes, I am poisoned; mother, make my bed soon;
> For I 'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down'!

The barony of Aberdour did not continue long in the family of Randolph. The Earl had two sons, who, like himself, were warriors, and, like himself, died prematurely. Thomas Randolph, the second Earl, fell at the battle of Dupplin; and John, the second son and third Earl, found

a soldier's grave at Durham. Their sister, Lady Agnes, a noted heroine, was married to Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March, and the earldom of Moray was for a time continued in their family. But before John Randolph fell, the barony of Aberdour had passed into the hands of the Douglases. Among the Morton papers there is a charter of the year 1341, in which John Randolph gives, grants, and confirms to Sir William Douglas of Liddesdale, his dear and faithful friend, the lands of Aberdour, with all their pertinents, for homage and service. And as John Randolph died childless, it cannot be, as some have affirmed, that the lands of Aberdour passed into the hands of the Douglas family by marriage.

It would be an easy matter to fill many lectures with the exploits of the family of the Douglases, who, in one of their branches, now became proprietors of the lands and castle of Aberdour, and have continued to own them through more than five centuries. Hume of Godscroft has written a whole volume on their lineage and history. However they may be traced, the fortunes of the family have been very fluctuating. At one time, as in the case of the good Sir James, a Douglas is the King's right-hand man; at another, as in the reign of James the Second, the decision seems to hinge on a single battle whether a Stewart or a Douglas shall sit on the throne of Scotland; and at a later period still, in the reign of James the Fifth, a royal proclamation is issued forbidding a Douglas to come within six miles of the King, on pain of treason.

The history of the house of Douglas has engaged the attention of many antiquaries, and after the speculations of George Chalmers in his *Caledonia*, and others, the simple truth seems at length to have been reached by Cosmo Innes. 'The ancestry of the first William of Douglas,' he tells us in his *Sketches of Early Scotch History*, 'is not to be found in a Scotch charter-chest. Like other knightly and baronial families of the Lowlands, he probably drew his origin

from some Norman or Saxon colonist, who, in that age of immigration and fluctuating surnames, sunk his previous style, perhaps some changing patronymic, like those of the ancestors of the Stuarts and of the Hamiltons, though little dreaming how illustrious was to become the name which he adopted from his settlement on the bank of the Douglas water.' The earlier name of the Stewarts was Fitz-Alan, and an earlier name of the Hamilton family was Fitz-Gilbert; but as these earlier names gave place to those of Stewart and Hamilton, so the earlier name of the Douglas family, which is now lost, gave place to that by which they have been so long known. I must, however, content myself, in what remains of this lecture, with notices of the briefest kind regarding those members of the family who owned the castle and lands of Aberdour. Sir William Douglas, the first of these, was so pre-eminently a hero in the estimation of his countrymen, that his name has been handed down by them linked with the epithet of the 'Flower of Chivalry.' It has to be admitted, however, that the less closely the claims of the 'Knight of Liddesdale' to this title are examined, the better will it be for his fame. However fairly chivalry may have flowered in his person, its fruit was of so very sanguinary a hue as not to be very pleasant to look at. Indeed, so many acts of bloodshed are attributed to him, that when thinking of him as we look at our own old castle, or as we gaze at the ruins of Hermitage Castle in Liddesdale, we are constrained to acknowledge that the 'Flower of Chivalry' yields rather a tainted odour.

From Sir William Douglas the lands of Aberdour passed to Sir James, his nephew, the son of the gallant defender of Lochleven Castle, and to him also passed the lands and castle of Dalkeith, which Sir William had acquired by marriage. But I am not to treat you to an enumeration of family connections, which at best confer but a minor distinction, and can only be regarded with much interest when associated with individual worth.

I may say here that in 1383 the barony of Aberdour was constituted by King Robert the Second an entire and free regality; and in a charter of confirmation, a copy of which is in my possession, this regality is said to include Woodfield, Tyrie, Seafield, and the two Balburtons, all of which were then in the possession of the proprietor of the lands of Aberdour. When we come to speak more particularly of Aberdour Wester we shall find that it was a burgh of barony, as Aberdour Easter was a burgh of regality. In the case of a burgh of barony the baron might not only hold courts for causing tenants to pay rents, but he could decide in cases of debt, and punish for *bloodwytes* (which originally meant the crime of shedding blood, although latterly it came to signify the fine imposed for that crime) to the extent of £50 *Scots*. And if the baron had, in addition to this, that fearful charge to be put into the hands of any single individual, the power of pit and gallows, he had a criminal jurisdiction nearly as ample as that of a Sheriff of the time. In the case of a regality the superior had a jurisdiction equal to the Supreme Court in criminal cases. He could even repledge from the Sheriff, and had a right to all the moveables of delinquents and rebels who dwelt within the bounds of his own jurisdiction.

The next name of special interest which we have to notice is that of the first Lord Morton. He married the Countess-Dowager of Angus, the daughter of James the First, and so was a brother-in-law of James the Second. He was a great favourite of the King's, and received from him the title of Earl of Morton, as well as several valuable grants of land. It was this Earl who founded the Hospital of St. Martha—the 'Nunnery,' as it came by and by to be called—in Easter Aberdour, the history of the foundation of which I shall relate to you in a subsequent lecture.

From the first Earl of Morton we pass to the fourth, the celebrated Regent. He was the son of Sir George Douglas

of Pittendriech, and having married the daughter of the third Earl, he wilily succeeded to his title and estates in 1553. Of this remarkable man we can at present say little, intending at some future time to devote an entire lecture to his history. Suffice it to say just now that he was a man of great natural ability and very considerable acquirements. He was brought up and received his education in England, the dislike of James the Fifth to the whole family of the Douglases having kept them there, in virtual banishment, up till the very period of that King's death. On Morton's return to Scotland he at first joined the 'Lords of the Congregation,' as they were called, and helped to advance the cause of the Reformation, but his efforts were by and by more turned in the direction of personal aggrandisement and State intrigue. He had some share in the movement which led to the murder of Darnley. At least it was capable of proof that he knew of it, and did not divulge what he knew, and consequently he had for a time to live beyond the bounds of the kingdom. After Darnley's death Morton again made his appearance, and played a most important part in State affairs. When the Regent Moray fell under the hand of a cowardly assassin, Morton gradually worked his way up to the highest place of political importance. He had been a principal actor during previous regencies; and now that he was unfettered, he carried out with great ability, daring, and unscrupulousness, a policy whose principal object seems to have been self-aggrandisement by impoverishing the Reformed Church and infringing the liberty of the subject. This policy, of necessity, made the Regent many enemies; and as the youthful King grew up, means were not wanting for entrapping Morton through some of his own schemes. In short, after the murder of Danrley had ceased to draw much attention to it, Morton was accused by one of the King's favourites of being an accomplice in the sanguinary plot, and, having been declared guilty, he was beheaded

at Edinburgh on the 3d of June 1581. 'Never was there seen,' says Archbishop Spotswood, 'a more notable example of fortune's mutability than in the Earl of Morton. He who a few years before had been reverenced by all men, and feared as a king, was now, at his end, forsaken by all and made the very scorn of fortune, to teach men how little stability there is in honour, wealth, friendship, and the rest of those worldly things that men do so much admire.'

It is an interesting thing for us to know that, soon after his resignation of the regency, Morton retired for a time to his castle of Aberdour, where he spent his time chiefly in husbandry and gardening. I have seen several charters which were signed by him while resident here. One would like to know what the appearance of this notable man was as he paced through our village, what his demeanour was as he worshipped in our old church, and his talk as he busied himself with his trees and flowers.

On his execution and attainder, a new charter of the earldom of Morton was ratified in favour of John Lord Maxwell, but the attainder was ere long rescinded, and the dignity passed to the heir of entail, Archibald Earl of Angus, who was the last Earl of Morton, of the house of Dalkeith.

The next proprietor of the lands and castle of Aberdour, who demands special notice at our hands, is William, the eighth Earl, who was Lord High Treasurer of Scotland. If some of the earlier proprietors of these lands were noted for their bravery, Earl William was renowned for his loyalty. Few subjects have made greater sacrifices for their sovereign than he did for Charles the First. He disposed of his lands of Dalkeith, and other properties belonging to him, to the amount of £100,000 Scots of yearly rental; and this splendid sacrifice he made in order that he might the better support the Royal cause. As some compensation for his generosity, he got a mortgage on

the islands of Orkney and Shetland, by a charter under the Great Seal in 1642. The sale of the lands of Dalkeith was the means of bringing him into closer relationship with Aberdour. Having built a large addition to the Castle, on its eastern side, he took up his residence there. It was he, too, who laid out the terraced garden at the south side of the Castle, who built the wall round it, who erected the summer-house at the south-east corner of it, and planted those fine old planes, elms, and other trees, which so greatly adorn the Castle grounds. I have in my possession copies of various charters signed by him at Aberdour between the years 1632 and 1647. He died in the year 1648.

The next incident connected with the Castle which I have to notice is that which left it a blackened ruin. During the troubles of 1715, when the Earl of Mar made a very foolish demonstration in favour of the old Pretender, a troop of dragoons were stationed in the Castle, in the Hanoverian interest; and I have been told, on what I consider good authority, that a fire accidentally broke out in a bedroom occupied by one of the officers, which led to the destruction of the inhabited part of the Castle. A valuable library, belonging to the Earl of Morton, is said to have perished at the same time.

The Castle having thus become uninhabitable, the Earls of Morton acquired Cuttlehill House, and a considerable portion of land belonging to it, on the west side of the Dour, and this became their Aberdour residence. It is almost in every case to be regretted when the old name of a property is made to give place to a new; and I cannot help being sorry on account of the change in the present instance. Aberdour House, as what was originally known as Cuttlehill House is now called, has been built at two separate times, the older part bearing the date 1672. The obelisk which crowns the hill—the original Cuttle-hill—was built by one of the Earls, in order that it might be a pro-

minent object from the family seat at Dalmahoy; but the trees have now almost concealed it from the view even of passers-by.

One other glimpse of the history of the old Castle, and I have done. In the year 1758 the western part of the Castle buildings was again roofed in, and some considerable time afterwards a troop of horse, under the command of Lord Morton, were quartered there. The circus-ring in which they exercised their horses can still be traced on the Castle green. I have reason to believe that there are, among my audience to-night, those who are old enough to have seen some of these soldiers, for the troop was soon afterwards disbanded, and some of the members of it took up their permanent residence in the village. A story I have heard of one of them, who, we may suppose, was by no means a fair representative of his comrades, is, I think, too good to be allowed to pass into oblivion. The name of the delinquent I do not know, but that is of little consequence. He had strolled to a farm-house in the neighbourhood, in which he found the goodwife busy preparing 'sowans'—a dish the nature of which need not be explained to a Scottish audience; and, acting on what the poet has called

> The good old rule, the simple plan,
> That he should take who has the power,
> And he should keep who can,

he helped himself unstintedly to the best fare the house afforded, and put it into a wallet with which he had knowingly provided himself. The goodwife saw that it was useless, at this stage, to interfere, and so allowed him to go; but not before she had laid her hands, still wet with the liquid of which the sowans were being made, gently on his back, which he, no doubt, interpreted as merely a gentle hint to depart. Having a shrewd guess who the

intruder was, she went to the Castle on the afternoon of the same day, and made her complaint to Lord Morton. The troopers were ordered out in a body, and stood in a row, facing their captain. Of course all denied having the remotest knowledge of the matter—the culprit being, in all likelihood, the loudest in his denial. The farmer's wife, being asked to point out the invader of her household stores, replied, 'My Lord, I canna tell by their faces; but if your Lordship will mak' them turn their backs I 'll sune find him oot.' Whereupon they were ordered to wheel round, and there, on the back of the luckless wight, were seen the marks of the ten wet fingers! The next application to his back, we may safely conclude, would not be quite so gentle.

As I have already noticed, the 'gallery' afterwards became the school; but I suppose there are few now who remember much about the Gibsons — 'Muckle' and 'Little Tammy,' as they were respectively and rather familiarly called,—and Lumgair, and Watson, the teachers, and fewer still who can boast of having stood on the 'shakin' wa',' or made an attempt on the 'Jay's Nest.'

I confess to a great liking for reminiscences of the past; and as even ministers must have some relaxation of mind, I have, for a considerable time past, made it mine to gather from aged lips, and older books and papers, these and such-like stories of the bygone time. And my pleasure will be increased if I think that, by thus stringing together what I have collected, I have given some amount of rational pleasure to the inhabitants of the village. I entertain the opinion, in which I suppose I am far from singular, that it is a good thing to call up, as fully and correctly as we can, before the mind, those who, in the past times, have peopled the same land with us, or even lived in the same village. And if, as will infallibly happen

in such a retrospect, we are brought face to face with error as well as truth, with evil as well as good, it will say little for our discernment and our wisdom if we do not learn the lesson, to follow after the things that are true and good; for these alone look well in every light, and these alone tend to our individual happiness, the welfare of our fellow-men, and the glory of God.

LECTURE II.

The old church and churchyard—The church a pre-Reformation one—The architecture of it—Inscription under west window—A church in Aberdour as early as the beginning of twelfth century—An early Columban settlement?—Fight between William de Mortimer and Canons of Inchcolme—Contest between the Canons and Simon of Balran—The chapel of Beaupré—The 'Fechtin' Bishop' and Richard of Kirkcaldy—St. Fillan and his luminous arm—The Pilgrims' Well—The Hospital of St. Martha : its site, foundation, endowment, confirmation, occupants, career, and fall—The Sisterlands.

Among the many objects of interest which are to be seen in and around our village, few have so many points of attraction as our old church, now in ruins, and the churchyard which surrounds it. The visitors who come to us during the bright months of summer have no sooner taken in the leading features of the landscape—the sparkling waters of the Firth, the cliffs of the 'Ha' Craig,' the beautifully-wooded 'Heughs' on the east, and the winding shore that stretches away to the west—than, as if by instinct, they turn to the old Castle and the old Church. And if the former is first visited, the more thoughtful stay for a longer time under the shadow of the now deserted church. The villagers, too, love this quiet retreat. Children are found playing on its moss-covered tombstones in sunny weather. Aged men, with staff in hand, are seen tottering among its stony records of the past, pointing out to one another where their early associates sleep, and giving a quiet glance at the place where they themselves will ere long be laid. Only they to whom the meditative mood never comes are strangers to the old churchyard. How picturesque and secluded is the situation! Standing on the south side of the church, you

are almost within a stone-cast of the easter village; and yet, but for the occasional shout of children, and some little bustle about the harbour, you might think yourselves miles away from any human habitation. The Castle buildings catch the eye as you turn to the west; but their cold, grey, ruined walls only deepen the sense of solitude. Around you swell the grassy mounds, where 'the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,' with here and there an upright stone, or recumbent slab of more modern date, which the hand of affection has placed to mark the names and record the virtues of the sleepers below. And ever and anon the warning reaches the eye, if it does not strike the heart: *Memento mori*—Keep in mind that you have one day to die! Raising your eyes over the somewhat ruinous churchyard wall, the noble trees meet your view which William, the eighth Earl of Morton, planted more than two centuries ago; and to the right you see the glittering waters of the Firth and the waving outline of the blue Pentlands beyond.

And what reflections rise in the mind as we gaze on the grassy mounds all around us! Here lie those who were inhabitants of the village more than seven centuries ago. Here sleep some of the unlettered peasantry of the dark and middle ages. Here are laid some of the scarcely more enlightened barons, and those retainers of theirs who fought alongside of them in many a skirmish, and were spared to return home, their warfare now ended. Here rest many of the former traders of the village. Sailors who in their time felt the tossing of many seas, have here found a quiet haven. Masters and servants have alike lain down to sleep here, the work of both over. The dust of friends and foes lies here peacefully blended. Here, side by side, repose ministers and people, teachers and scholars, parents and children. Here 'the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.' It is in such a place as this that Gray's inimitable 'Elegy' should be studied, in order to

discover its wonderful truthfulness to nature, as well as the literary beauties that lurk in every line. And perhaps there is no place where the finest passages of Blair's celebrated poem, 'The Grave,' can be read with such effect as here, beside the grave and mouldering tombstone of his still more noted grandfather, Robert Blair, minister of St. Andrews, who was at one time chaplain to Charles the First, and who, 'being dead, yet speaketh' in the Christian motto that can still be read on his poor crumbling monument, *Mors Janua Vitae*—Death is the Gate of Life.

But it is time to have done with these musings in order that we may have a careful look at the ruined church, and then tell something of its history, and what we know of those who have ministered and worshipped within its walls.

A careful look at the old church tells us that it was built before the Reformation, although some alterations have been made on its original structure. And yet, roofless and hastening to utter decay as it is, its early form can easily be traced. The easternmost part—the chancel—which is 23 feet 8 inches long by 18 feet 7 inches wide, measured from the outside, was the portion set apart for the use of those who performed Divine service. It was separated from the nave or body of the church by a screen, and was lighted by four narrow round-headed windows. Three of these have, to some extent, been altered, but the original construction may easily be seen from an examination of the one in the north wall. Although these windows are 3 feet in length, they are only 12 inches wide on the outside; but they widen in the interior into a deep splay, till the opening measures, at its greatest width, 4 feet 2 inches. Beneath one of the windows is an ambry, in which the utensils of the altar were, in all likelihood, kept. There is a fine arch, of a decidedly Norman character, between the chancel and the nave; and the nave has an aisle on its south side. The pillars which divide the nave from the aisle are cylindrical in form, and very strong in proportion

to their height. They support three large semicircular arches. The north wall is nearly perfect, and is pierced by three windows. Only one of these, however, is old—the narrow round-headed one, which is 5 feet long by 14 inches wide. There was at one time a round-headed door, near the west end of this wall. The building which joins on to the wall in question was first an aisle, and is now converted into a vault. It was no part of the original building; but was erected in 1608 by the family of Phin of Whitehill, whose initials, along with the date, are still to be read on it. The south wall is very much reduced in height; and, while a great quantity of rubbish has been allowed to collect inside of it, it is still more to be regretted that a bank of earth has been heaped against it on the outside, which makes the wall appear much lower than it actually is. And, strange to say, in this forced earth graves have been dug, and the dead buried, which renders improvement in that direction wellnigh impossible. The west wall has a double splayed window, with two pointed lights, and a pear-shaped opening in the head. The whole appearance of this window points it out as comparatively modern; and the way in which the belfry is placed on the wall points it out as evidently of a still more recent date. Immediately under the window is a slab with the following inscription in capital letters highly relieved :—

PANS[1] · O · PILGRIM
THAT · PASSITH · BY · THIS · WAY
VPON · THYN · END
AND · THOV · SAL · FEAR · TO · SIN
AND · THINK · ALSO
VPON · THE · LATTER · DAY
WHEN · THOV · TO · GOD · MAN · COVNT
THEN · BEST · THOV · NOW · BEGIN.

I shall by and by show you that Aberdour was in early times a great place of resort for pilgrims, owing to the

[1] *Pans*=think.

attractions of a holy well; and I think it likely that it was for the benefit of these strangers, in the first instance, that this inscription was placed under the window of the church.

The date 1588 on the belfry gives us, in all likelihood, the period when the latest alterations of any moment were made on the church. But the great body of the building, as I have already said, is manifestly very old, and may have been reared a century, or even two, before the period of the Reformation. The nave is 55 feet long, and, including the aisle, is 35 feet wide. The vault belonging to the Morton family is evidently an innovation, and was probably constructed about the time when William, the eighth Earl, came to reside at the Castle. But of this vault, and those whose remains rest within it, we shall have more to say in another connection.[1] The porch at the south-west corner of the church was evidently the entrance to the building before alterations had been made on it, probably about the time of the Reformation. Although roofless, it is pretty entire. The inner door is still traceable; and a little to the east of it is a small recess, probably what is called a 'stoupe,' for holding holy water.

Concluding from the evidence that has been laid before you, that this old church was the place of worship for the parish throughout a period stretching from before the Reformation till the close of last century, much of a historical kind that is interesting might be told regarding it, although our researches should go no further back. But we know, from the Bull of Pope Alexander the Third, to which reference has already been made, that there was a church at Aberdour as early as the year 1178. This carries us nearly four hundred years further back, to a period between the conquest of Ireland by Henry the Second and the Third Crusade; and some information regarding the church of Aberdour between that early time and the period

[1] See Appendix I.

of the Reformation may be gleaned from the Chartulary of Inchcolme, and other quarters.

The question, indeed, may at this stage be put, and should get an answer, whether authentic information does not carry us further back still. It is to be remembered that when the Romans invaded our country, in the eightieth year of the Christian era, the inhabitants, both north and south of the Forth, were Pagans. The first rays of Christianity seem to have come to Scotland with soldiers of the squadrons of the Cæsars. It would thus appear that it was not from Romish Priests, but Roman soldiers, that the light first came which, in spite of many a temporary eclipse, was to put to flight the darkness of Paganism. Indeed, the early Christian Church, in the northern part as well as in the south of our island, was on many questions decidedly opposed to the tenets of Rome, and for centuries withstood her arrogant claims. It is no doubt true, as the historians tell us, that St. Ninian came as Bishop to the Southern Picts, and St. Palladius as Bishop to the Scots, when these were yet separate and rival nations. But every intelligent reader of the New Testament knows that the earliest bishops were simply pastors: and Ninian and Palladius were, as has been well said, more like itinerant Methodist preachers, or missionaries, than bishops in the modern sense of the term. Strange as it may sound in some ears, the land to which our country was more indebted than to any other in those early days was Ireland. From that country came Columba and his missionary companions, in the sixth century, to Iona, from which, as a base, they operated on both Scots and Picts, carrying the blessings of Christianity away also into the northern parts of England, and eventually even into distant parts of the continent of Europe. Now it certainly would be an interesting thing could we discover how the district in which we live was affected by the labours of the first missionaries of the Cross among the Southern Picts; what rays of Chris-

tianity, reflected from the Roman soldiery who professed it, had struggled into the district; how far the labours of St. Ninian told on its inhabitants; and to what extent the preaching of St. Columba and his followers among them was successful. Much as we would hail information of such a kind regarding these early times, it has to be admitted that it is only when we come to the last-named period that we have any written reference to our neighbourhood, and even that is sometimes of rather a shadowy kind. Over the whole neighbourhood, however, there is a hazy gleam, telling of Columba, and his influence over it. It is not merely that the monastery on Inchcolme was dedicated to him, and stands on an island called by his name—an island which he is said to have visited, and on which a hermit devoted to his service undoubtedly had his cell before the monastery was founded,—but from the earliest times of which we have any notice, Aberdour has belonged to the See of Dunkeld, which was the headquarters of the Columban missionaries after they left Iona; and the patron saint of our church was St. Fillan, who, like Columba himself, was Scoto-Irish. If Columba did not personally labour in our neighbourhood, there is every likelihood that some of his followers did. There are many strange stories told of the labours of St. Servanus at Culross, on the one hand, and Dysart on the other, but none of his spurious miracles are said to have been wrought here.

Coming down, now, to the notices of the church of Aberdour contained in the Chartulary of Inchcolme, some may be ready to ask, as a preliminary question, where the church of the twelfth century stood. To this we reply—and we have already assumed it—that undoubtedly it occupied the site of the present ruined church. It was a most unusual thing in early times to shift the site of a church; and when this was done, the old churchyard infallibly told where the earlier church had stood. And as no earlier churchyard than that which surrounds the ruined church is known, we

may be quite sure that from the very earliest times any church that existed at Aberdour stood there.

What would we not give for a look at the little church of the twelfth century, to mark its appearance, to see the worshippers in their old-fashioned costume, and especially to observe the religious services in which they engage? Would we not give a great deal to see what goes on in it, on some high day, which has brought the Abbot and Canons over from Inchcolme, and has called together a great many of the inhabitants of Aberdour? Now it so happens that by means of one of the old charters we do get a glimpse of what goes on, both in and around the church, at a very early time. It is somewhere towards the close of the twelfth century. The church of Aberdour had become vacant, probably by the death of the Vicar, whose name does not transpire, and it became necessary to appoint a successor. It would appear, moreover, that even as far back as the times of the Crusades, a vacancy in the church of Aberdour could not be filled up without a good deal of din and dust. The Abbot and Canons of Inchcolme were the undoubted patrons of the benefice. But it so happened that David, Earl of Huntingdon, the brother of the King (William the Lion), had heard of the vacancy —being probably at the time resident at Dunfermline,—and he made application to William de Mortimer on behalf of Robert, his clerk, that he might be appointed to the charge. William de Mortimer was a member of the family of whom I have already spoken as possessors of the castle and barony of Aberdour. He was, no doubt, anxious to oblige the King's brother; and although it might have been considered an obstacle in the way that he happened not to be the patron, yet the barons of those days were not men to stick at trifles, and so Robert was, in the most handsome manner, presented to the vacant charge. Some legal forms, however, needed to be gone through ere Robert's position was quite impregnable. He had to be

seised and vested in the church, or inducted, as we should now-a-days say; and this business, to be gone about fairly, had to be managed by certain messengers sent by the baron, as well as some clerks of the King's. But much falls between the cup and the lip, and it is difficult to catch either a fox or an abbot asleep. The tidings of what was that day to be done had been carried by some bird of the air across the water to Inchcolme, and so Abbot and Canons were early astir, and the oars of their boat, as they skimmed the water, gleamed in the rays of the morning sun. The mainland being reached, the members of the Convent were seen making straight for the church, and it was high time for them to enter an appearance, for others were there bent on giving them trouble. The Abbot and Canons took up their position before the door of the church, holding a cross aloft, and various precious relics, which, we fear, were made still more worthy of the name by that day's service; and thus shielded by the symbols of sanctity, these reverend fathers lifted up their voices when the clerks and messengers appeared, and declared that the deed that day threatened to be done was a foul wrong, and there and then they formally put the church of Aberdour under the protection of the Pope, and made their appeal to him. All this was of course sufficiently imposing, and might have been considered weighty enough to stay proceedings in the matter of Robert's induction for that day at least. But it did not produce the desired effect on William de Mortimer and his retainers; for the Canons of Inchcolme were shamefully beaten, dragged about, and put to flight, and Robert was intruded into the charge (*omnibus tandem turpiter pulsatis, tractatis, atque fugatis, Robertum intruserunt*). A very early and aggravated case of intrusion, you will all admit! But Robert did not long enjoy the hard-won emoluments, or even the honours, of his office. The Abbot and Canons found ways and means by which William de Mortimer and Robert his *protégé* were brought to a

sense of their wrong-doing. For by and by we find Robert making his peace with the brethren of Inchcolme, and giving up all claim to the church; and William de Mortimer signs a deed, in which he makes a most humbling confession of the wrong he has done, and, declaring that he has now discovered that the church of Aberdour had belonged to the Canons of Inchcolme in the days of King Alexander, King David, and King Malcolm, he renounces all claim to be patron of it.

A considerable time elapses ere we get another peep into the church of those early times. At length the year 1273 comes round. It is in the troublous times that followed the melancholy death of Alexander the Third, at Kinghorn, in our neighbourhood. To those who wish something named contemporary with what I am about to relate, it may be said that Dante, the Italian poet, was alive at the time. It is Thursday, and the first return of that day after the Feast of St. Leonard, so it must have been in the gloomy month of November. On that day there is again a great concourse of people in the old church. Robert de Stutteville, Bishop of Dunkeld, who played such an important part in the rebellion headed by the Earl of Menteith, is there. So are representatives of the Convent of Inchcolme. And, last of all, among the leading personages we see Simon of Balran—a place in our neighbourhood, now known as Balram. But, in addition to these, there are present, as the old charter assures us, a great many men of credit and renown. A controversy is evidently going on, and while the Bishop sits as umpire, and some member of the Convent makes a statement on the one side, Simon replies on the other. At length the Bishop thinks the matter is clear enough, and gives his decision; whereupon a roll of parchment is produced, and a scribe sits down and writes leisurely a statement, which is read in the hearing of all. Then the Bishop appends his seal, and Simon does the same; and the matter takes end. And what, you are

ready to ask, is it all about? Has Simon been suspected of heresy, and has he appealed to the judgment of the Bishop of the diocese? And has he at length recanted, and appended his seal to a declaration in harmony with the views of Holy Mother Church? Nothing of the kind. The dispute is regarding the land of Leyis, which Simon's grandfather had made over to the Monastery, and regarding the ownership of which some question has now arisen. But Simon seems to stand quite erect, in presence of the Bishop and the Canons of Inchcolme, and states his case, and claims what he deems to be his right. And he must have made some impression on the Bishop, for while he quit-claims the land of Leyis to the Monastery, and appends his seal to the document which declares this, forty silver marks have to pass over from the purse of the treasurer of the Convent into Simon's pocket.

We have hitherto been speaking of the old church of Aberdour as if it had been the only one in the parish. But it may interest you to know that, at a very early period, there was a chapel, in our immediate neighbourhood, at a place called Beaupré. The name, curiously enough, is French, signifying 'the beautiful meadow,' and has now become corrupted into Bowprie. I find mention made of this chapel as early as the year 1320, six years after the battle of Bannockburn. The place was, at that time, known as the Grange of Beaupré. It was, no doubt, a farm place belonging to the brethren of the Monastery, where their grain was stored. Most of the religious houses of the time had granges, and it was not an uncommon thing for such places to have a chapel attached to them. Let us see what goes on in the little chapel at Beaupré on the occasion referred to. It is a Saturday, and a day set apart to commemorate the holy widow Felicitas; so it is once more in the month of November. No less a personage is present than William Sinclair, Bishop of Dunkeld, 'the Fechtin' Bishop,' as he is sometimes called. He has not had far to come, having

in all likelihood been living at the time at the baronial residence of the Bishop of Dunkeld, near Auchtertool, a residence afterwards known as Hallyards, and now called Camilla. Sir Richard, the chaplain of Aberdour, is also present; a person of the name of William Godard; a workman belonging to Aberdour, whose name is Thomas, probably either the joiner or the blacksmith of the village; and many more. But in addition to all these there is a stranger present, a Churchman too he is, as you may perceive by his dress. He is Richard of Kirkcaldy, Rector of the church of Melville, in the diocese of St. Andrews, and he has come to settle a little matter of business before the Bishop. There has been a misunderstanding between him and the Abbot and Convent of Inchcolme. Near the church of Leslie, then called Fithkil, which belonged to the Monastery of Inchcolme, there stood a little chapel called 'the Chapel of the Blessed Mary.' It stood near the cemetery of the church of Fithkil, a church regarding which many interesting things, both ancient and modern, might be told, among others this, that, according to Allan Ramsay, it was the scene of the famous Scottish poem, 'Christ's Kirk on the Green.' It might be supposed that in the case of such a matter as a chapel there could be little room for a contest as to ownership. Yet so it was. The Rector of Melville claimed it, and so did the Abbot and Convent of Inchcolme. Richard of Kirkcaldy has, however, now got more light on the matter, whether struck out by the blows of controversy, or due to the presence of 'the Fechtin' Bishop,' we shall not determine. But he is now willing to renounce all claim of right and law to the Chapel of the Blessed Mary, and he is there that day to append his seal to a document which sets this clearly forth. The various seals are of course appended to the agreement, but to make assurance doubly sure, a copy of the Scriptures, laid open at the Holy Evangelists, is placed before the Rector, and with his hand on it he solemnly swears his renunciation of right.

After this slight digression we turn again to the old church of Aberdour. It was the custom long ago to dedicate every church to some saint or other. I mentioned incidentally a little while ago that our old church was dedicated to St. Fillan. This was easily said, but who can describe the labour expended ere it could be stated as an undoubted fact? I made inquiry about it at the living, without success; I had recourse to the dead, through the books they had written; but where I found any reference made to the church, the place where the saint's name should have been was a blank. I made inquiry as to the date of Aberdour Fair, thinking to steal a march on the saint in that way. But I found that the 20th of June—your Fair-day—led me to St. Columba's Day. In the immediate neighbourhood of the Monastery dedicated to him, it was not wonderful that St. Columba should have eclipsed a minor saint. In short, it was not until, hunting for some fact connected with the village, I lighted on the will of Sir James Douglas, of date 1390, and printed in the Morton papers, that I found what had so long evaded my search. The lands and barony of Aberdour, as we lately saw, passed from the hands of the 'Knight of Liddesdale' into those of his nephew, Sir James Douglas. This Sir James, I found, being desirous of giving some token of good-will to the church nestling under the shadow of his castle, bequeathed £3, 6s. 8d., a considerable sum in those days, for the purchase of vestments for the church of St. Fillan of Aberdour. So the problem was at length solved. And who, it may be asked, was St. Fillan? I have already spoken of him as a Scoto-Irish saint, but something more special must now be said of him. Judging from the accounts which have been handed down to us, he was a man in every way worthy of our notice. It appears that as early as the seventh century he was Abbot of Pittenweem in Fife. But so much did he love solitude that he retired from the bustle of that place, which must surely have been something

more formidable then than it is now; and he ended his days in a hermitage in the wilds of Glenorchy in Perthshire. This good man, it further appears, had many remarkable and useful qualities. While engaged in writing, his left arm, resting on the parchment, emitted so brilliant a light that, in the darkest nights, a candle or a lamp was to him quite a superfluity, and as he was a late sitter, this arm of his must have proved a great saving to the convent; although, of course, it could not be so conveniently carried about for the general behoof as a lamp could. In the pages of monkish chroniclers everything out of the common run of events connected with the Church or Churchmen was spoken of as miraculous, to the sad detriment of those incidents which, at the beginning of the Christian era, had a right to be so regarded. But we have no doubt that St. Fillan, could he only be properly described, would be found to have had many real excellencies. The virtues of his luminous arm, if we may believe the chroniclers, did not pass away with his life. It was deemed worthy of being placed in a silver shrine after the good man had no more personal need of it; and many a remarkable incident was traced to it. It is well known that King Robert the Bruce had a great reverence for the memory of St. Fillan, and this silver shrine was carried at the head of his army to the field of Bannockburn. I have intentionally said *the shrine;* but there can be no doubt that both the King and the saint intended that the arm should be in it. Maurice, Abbot of Inchaffray, afterwards Bishop of Dunblane, was however a man of considerably less faith than Bruce was, and thinking it a possible thing that the casket might fall into the hands of the English, he, keeping the secret meanwhile to himself, deposited the arm in a place of safety at a distance from the battlefield, and with much pawky coolness marched before the army with the empty casket. In the heat of the battle the Bruce is said to have uttered a hasty prayer to the saint, turning his eyes the while to the casket, little dreaming that

it was empty. The Abbot retained his gravity, but the saint could stand the deception no longer. Was the Bruce to risk life and limb, and his kingdom to boot, on the issue of the battle, and was St. Fillan to connive at the cowardice of being afraid to risk his dead arm, or be guilty of the meanness of pretending that he ran the risk? The thing was not for a moment to be thought of! The Bruce's prayer was hardly uttered when the lid of the casket was observed to open suddenly, and as suddenly to close with a click. The battle was won, and Scotland was free; and when the casket was opened, in it lay the arm of St. Fillan!

Well, we know that the battle of Bannockburn was fought and won in another way than this. Brawny arms wielding heavy claymores dealt sturdy blows to the assailants of the independence of Scotland, and manly hearts, that throbbed with a strong passion for freedom and with the scorn of tyranny, lent weight to these blows. But above all, God, who has endowed man with the love of freedom, had better things in store for our countrymen, and for us, than the substitution of debasing servitude for that liberty which is Scotland's birthright. The monkish fable which I have related to you no doubt betrays much weakness and ignorance; but it, and other similar stories that find a place in the chronicler's pages, indicate another quality, for which I must utter a word of commendation in reference to the ecclesiastics of Scotland in those early days. These men, Roman Catholics though they were, were at the same time patriots. They loved their country, and had no sympathy with any one who tampered with its civil liberty, be he king, prelate, or pope. The system of Popery has expanded since then, and as it has developed it has sunk in character. Ultramontanism means the bondage of conscience and the death of patriotism.

Wherever you find a church or chapel dedicated to St. Fillan, the likelihood is that you will find near it a well, or pool of water, which in old times was believed to be endowed

with miraculous qualities. Near the old church of St. Fillan's, in the parish of Killin, there is a pool called the 'Holy Pool,' which was long thought to be efficacious in the cure of lunacy; and many were the cases in which, down to a comparatively recent period, those afflicted with that sad ailment were dipped in it. In the Statistical Account of that parish there is a curious notice of a bell which belonged to this church, and has now found a resting-place in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries in Edinburgh. This bell, which is about 18 inches in height, is of an oblong shape, as is the case with many ecclesiastical bells of a great age, and it was reputed to have many strange qualities. When any one was dipped in the pool for lunacy the cure was thought incomplete till the bell was put on the patient's head. It was believed also to be possessed of a very convenient quality, which effectually prevented its being stolen. When any one carried it off, it found its way back to the old chapel with as unerring certainty as the saint's arm did to its silver shrine at Bannockburn. It seems, too, to have amused itself on its return journey home by ringing all the way!

I do not know that our church of St. Fillan had any remarkable bell belonging to it; but undoubtedly we can claim a pilgrims' well of great notoriety, and there is great likelihood that this well owed something of its supposed potency to the saint. As a long blank now occurs in the information we have regarding the old church, I shall devote the remainder of this lecture to an account of the Hospital of St. Martha, which owed its origin to the well in question.

If little has hitherto been known by the villagers in modern times regarding their old church, still less is known in reference to this Hospital. So much had the lapse of three hundred years obliterated the memory of it, that, in answer to many inquiries, I could elicit from the villagers no more information about it than this: that a 'nunnery' once stood on the site of the old manse in the easter village, and that the ground known as 'the Sisterlands' had

at one time belonged to it. The very name of the Hospital had been forgotten. It is on this account a source of great pleasure to me to be able to give some account of this interesting old place.

The Hospital of St. Martha, then, did stand on the site afterwards occupied by the old manse in the easter village; and the buildings connected with it, in all likelihood, extended a considerable way back from the main street. None of the original buildings now remain, but the curious in such matters may still discover some of the stones that composed the old edifice built into the wall that encloses the garden immediately behind. The hospital owed its origin to James, the first Earl of Morton, who was married to one of the daughters of King James the First of Scotland. We know that in the year 1474 Michael was Abbot of the Monastery of Inchcolme, and Sir John Scot was Vicar of Aberdour. At that early period Aberdour was much resorted to by pilgrims, the great source of attraction being the 'Pilgrims' Well,' of which I have just spoken. The heart of the Vicar had, it appears, often been melted at the thought of the little accommodation provided for these pilgrims and poor people, and he earnestly besought the Earl to provide some shelter for them; hinting, at the same time, that it was a good opportunity for him to do something for the expiation of his own sins, and those of his progenitors. The Vicar's suggestion was piously and warmly entertained by the Earl, and steps were taken to have the work gone about with all possible despatch. It may have helped on the work that the Pope, Sixtus the Fourth, had, about three years before this time, written a letter to Lord Morton, as to other important personages, intimating his assumption of the purple, his desire that heretics should be exterminated, and Holy Mother Church thus be more firmly established than ever, and that kings and princes should, in short, do their best for the Pope, in which case he would do his best for them. Such a work

as the foundation of a religious house could not, however, be well proceeded with until the sanction of the Abbot and Canons of Inchcolme should be got, seeing that one of their number was to have charge of it. The Earl accordingly addressed a formal request to them that they would allow the Vicar of Aberdour to have the care, administration, disposition, and conservation of the Hospital about to be erected, it being understood that the successors of the Vicar in the church of Aberdour should succeed, by virtue of this office, to the rectorial care of the projected institution. The Abbot and Canons at once granted his Lordship's request, and they bound themselves in the most solemn manner to be no parties to the alienation of the property of the Hospital, or the application of its revenues to other purposes than those which the literal rendering of his Lordship's deed of foundation warranted. In their deed of obligation they further declared that, since the work contemplated by his Lordship is one which is in itself good, and flows from charity, they would be ashamed in any way to turn its revenues aside to other purposes. Poverty with the favour of God, they say, is to them dearer than riches without it. And since they themselves delight in the projected work, and have a wish to please his Lordship, their approval is all the more readily given. It is understood that the Vicar and his successors in office are to have the care and management of the Hospital if no canonical impediment should stand in the way; and the whole Convent give the assurance that they will not sell nor appropriate it to their own use, or the use of any other; neither will they intromit with its revenue in any other way than the literal rendering of his Lordship's deed of concession and ordination warrants.

Then comes the charter, on which the deed of obligation proceeds, in which James Earl of Morton wishes all men to take notice that he has, of his own free will, made over in the surest way that acre of land lying within the territory

of his town of Aberdour, at the east end of it, and on the north side of the road which leads to the town of Kingorne (Kinghorn), to that religious man, his familiar and beloved friend, Sir John Scot, Vicar of Aberdour, and his assignees. The Earl relates how the pious importunity of the Vicar had led him to consider whether he ought not to do something which might be a solace to pilgrims, and some measure of support to the poor, and which might, at the same time, be dedicated to the Omnipotent God, and His Most Blessed Mother, Mary, our Lady, ever-Virgin, and the blessed Martha, the hostess of our Lord Jesus Christ; which, moreover, might be of some avail towards the expiation of his own sins and the sins of his parents. For these ends his Lordship desires it may be known that he has given the aforesaid acre of land, and as great a space over and above this as is required for the site of the proposed buildings; that he has given free entrance and exit to and from every part of the buildings, as well as the acre; also that he has given as much land on the east side of the proposed site as will suffice for a cart-road. All this, he further declares, is done with the consent of his two sons, John his heir, and James his younger son.

It is stipulated, in reference to the Vicar, that he shall have during his lifetime, and after him the Vicars his successors, the whole care and management of the Hospital, unless they shall neglect it, or turn its revenues aside to other uses than those for which it has been founded. Nor shall the Vicar be removed from his office as Rector of the Hospital, and from the rights belonging to it, unless he becomes an oppressor of the poor or a spoiler of their goods. It is further stipulated that, if anything should happen, at the instance of any of the Earl's heirs or assignees, to invalidate this grant of land, he shall be held to have granted to the Vicar, and the Hospital of St. Martha, fourteen acres of land, lying at the west boundary of the town of Dalkeith: which land his Lordship had bought with his own money

from Marcus Dunbar. And in order that nothing more may be wanting to complete the transaction, William Gifford, his Lordship's uncle, is ordered to give state and seisin of the land to the Vicar. The Earl's seal is appended to the charter, at Dalkeith, on the 10th of July 1474, and the Monastery seal is appended to the obligation. Such is the nature of the first document connected with the Hospital. The ecclesiastics of those early days were great adepts in the art of leading men on to the ice, as regards gifts of land. One acre of land, even at that time, must have been quite inadequate to the maintenance of the Hospital. But the great thing was to get his Lordship on the ice. A gentle push would keep him moving after that. Accordingly, after five years had elapsed, we find the Earl granting three additional acres of land in his town of Aberdour, which acres were then occupied by John Young the fuller, and Robert and Walter Cant, and this land is to be held as a donation to the Hospital, for behoof of the poor people living and lodging there : with all and whole the liberties and commodities pertaining to it—bloodwytes excepted : and alienation of the land is prohibited, under pain of the Divine indignation. His Lordship ordains, moreover, that in case any one shall ever think of building on the south of the street, near the Hospital, there shall be left such a space as then existed between the house of Clement Cant and the house of David Hume, so that there may be, in all time coming, a road not less than sixteen ells in breadth, extending to 'le pilgramys well.' Of this well I shall have something to say at a later stage.

His Lordship having granted this additional boon, it may occur to some one to ask what corresponding advantage he was likely to reap. We are far from supposing that the consciousness of showing kindness to the poor pilgrims was not considered by him a sufficient reward. But in addition to this, he was allowed the privilege of indicating what souls were daily to be prayed for by the Vicar, and those

who were to enjoy the shelter of the Hospital. And the Earl availed himself of this privilege, as the following list will show, which embraces the names and designations of some persons then living, of others who had been long dead, and references to others still who had not yet been born.

There was, first of all, the soul of the late illustrious monarch, James the Third; then the soul of the illustrious Queen Margaret his spouse; and the souls of the excellent Prince, James the Fourth and his children. After these the Earl enumerates the soul of James Douglas, of happy memory, his great-grandfather; also of James Douglas, of happy memory, the father of the founder, and Elizabeth his mother. He seems to have had some pique at his grandfather, for he is not named. Then, to continue the list, there was his own soul, that of his illustrious lady, Johanna, the third daughter of James the First; the souls of John and James his sons, and of Johanna and Elizabeth his daughters; with all his ancestors, successors, and benefactors, and all the faithful dead.

Such were the persons whose souls were to be prayed for while the Hospital stood; and regularly as the hour of noon came round, the poor persons and pilgrims who found shelter within its walls were to assemble in the chapel of the Hospital, after the ringing of the bell, and there, on bended knees, were devoutly to repeat five *Paternosters* and five *Ave Marias*. It is long since the bell of St. Martha's Hospital has ceased to ring; long since pilgrims and palmers flocked to Aberdour to drink the waters of its holy well; and long since, at the hour of noon, they hied to the little chapel to repeat on bended knees *Paternosters* and *Angelical Salutations*. Yet we might profit by making the inquiry whether we are as earnest, as devout, and as true to the greater light we enjoy, as the founder of St. Martha's Hospital and the pilgrims who frequented its chapel, nearly four centuries ago, were to the measure of light they possessed.

It has to be stated, to the credit of his Lordship, that, in this second charter, there is found a stringent clause ordaining that if the Rector of the Hospital should ever abuse the revenues committed to his care, or lead an immoral life, he should be expelled from the office, and some God-fearing man put in his place.

An important part of the history of the Hospital has yet to be told. Lord Morton had been led gently on the ice, and had got one push. Another was yet necessary. First one acre of land had been bestowed on the contemplated Hospital. Then other three had been granted; and it had been arranged that the fruit and produce of the lands thus given should for three years be applied to the erection of the necessary buildings, and afterwards go to the support of the poor pilgrims. In 1486—twelve years after the project was launched—his Lordship is found complaining that, after all he has given, the works are not yet completed. And in that year he grants other four acres of his lands of Inchmartin, lying near the Hospital, and at that time occupied by David Gifford, making altogether eight acres.

In this year, moreover, we detect a change of purpose of an important kind. The first project was to have a Hospital, of which the Vicar of Aberdour and his successors in office should be Rectors. Now that plan is laid aside, and it is resolved that four Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis shall look after the pilgrims. With a view to this, we find Sir John Scot making over to Lord Morton, in favour of Isobel and Jean Wight, Frances Henryson, and Jean Dross, Sisters of the Holy Order of St. Francis, the care and administration of the poor travellers; and it is expressly enjoined that these Sisters shall daily go into the chapel, at the hour of noon, when the bell has ceased to ring, and repeat, on bended knees, five *Paternosters* and five *Angelical Salutations*, with such other prayers as are pleasing to them. These Sisters are

expressly mentioned in the last charter which his Lordship granted; and the various gifts which he had made to the Hospital through the Vicar are made over to them and their successors in office.

The Hospital, under the guardianship of these ladies, was speedily equipped, and in the following year, 1487, it was confirmed by a Bull of Pope Innocent the Eighth. The nuns of the Order thus installed in the Hospital of St. Martha go by various names: Poor Clares, Nuns of St. Clair, Claresses, and Sisters of Penitence of the Third Order of St. Francis. Two facts account for all these designations. The nuns referred to were originally established by St. Clair in Italy, and they were admitted into the Order of Franciscans by St. Francis himself. St. Francis prescribed a particular Rule for them, full of austerities, but whether or not our Aberdour nuns followed it strictly, I am not in a position to say.

Although the Hospital was short-lived—having after its full equipment had only a career extending over seventy-three years—it might have been expected that some notices of its history should be extant. That it gave shelter to many a poor pilgrim, coming to Aberdour to seek some assuagement of pain by the use of the waters of the holy well, we cannot doubt. But the only scrap of information I can find regarding it has reference to its fall, at the time of the Reformation. On the 18th of August 1560, the nuns—whose names at that time were Agnes Wrycht, called *Mother*, and Elizabeth Trumball, Margaret Crummy, and Cristina Cornawell, *Sisters*—set in feu to James, Earl of Morton, afterwards the celebrated Regent, the eight acres commonly called 'the Sisterlands,' with the place and garden in the town of Aberdour; and this they did, with their hand at the pen, led by notary—which means that they could not write their own names. To this deed the Convent seal, having a figure of the Virgin, was affixed.

Spotiswood, in his *Religious Houses*, speaking of the nuns who followed the Order of St. Francis, says, 'The nuns of this institute had only two houses in this country, namely, Aberdour in the shire of Fife, and Dundee in the shire of Angus, of whom there is little or no mention made by our writers.'

A sentence or two more regarding the Pilgrims' Well, and I have done. I have little doubt, from what aged people have told me, that this well lay about thirty yards to the south-east of the south-east corner of the old churchyard. There is another well, with a fine spring of water, to the south of this locality, and quite close to the harbour; but tradition does not point to it as having at any time had more than ordinary virtue in its water; whereas old people have assured me that, within the memory of their parents, persons afflicted with sore eyes used to come from a great distance to seek relief from the application of the water of the other well. This, in all likelihood, was the last trace of the old belief, that it possessed miraculous efficacy. The practice of superstitiously resorting to so-called holy wells engaged the attention of the Synod of Fife as lately as the year 1649, and the following is the resolution which was then come to: 'The Assemblie, being informit that some went superstitiouslie to wellis, denominat from Saintis, ordains Presbitries to tak notice thairof, and to censure these that are guiltie of that falt.' As the Synod met on that occasion in Dunfermline, it is not unlikely that the deliverance may have had some reference to the Pilgrims' Well at Aberdour.

Such are a few facts regarding your old church, and such the history—now, I believe, for the first time told—of the Hospital of St. Martha. I wish the narrative had been made more interesting. But it has been a task of some difficulty, out of a few legal documents, abounding in contractions, and in some parts effaced, to produce an intelligible history of the old nunnery, not to speak of an interesting one.

LECTURE III.

The Monastery of Inchcolme—The influence wielded by monastic institutions—Interest connected with the island—Danish monument—St. Columba—The hermit's oratory—Foundation of Monastery—Alexander the Fierce—Bull of Pope Alexander the Third—List of churches and other possessions—The Order of Augustinian Canons—Early monastic edifice—Diocese of Dunkeld—Bishops buried on Inchcolme—Story of the 'Fechtin' Bishop'—An Abbot of romance—Legend of Sir Alan Mortimer's daughter.

HAVING now laid before you such historical notices as I have been able to find connected with our old Castle, the old Church before the period of the Reformation, and the Hospital of St. Martha throughout the whole of its short-lived existence, I am to-night to solicit your attention to the Monastery of Inchcolme. I am not to present you with such a statement of its foundation, and its history from first to last, as would satisfy the insatiable cravings of antiquaries. This would not suit the circumstances in which these lectures are delivered. All that I shall attempt is to lay before you the leading facts of the history of the old religious house in as popular and pleasing a way as I can; but at the same time making no statement which I have not been at pains to verify, as far as the means of doing so have been within my reach. It is unfortunate for me that I have not the labours of others in this field to fall back on, as the present is, so far as I am aware, the first attempt to give anything like a full account of the Monastery.

I shall not enter on any lengthened preliminary statement to prove the importance of the subject, either in its general aspect as bearing on the history of our country, or

its more special aspect as having a claim on the attention of those who live in the immediate neighbourhood of the ruins of the old Abbey. That the monastic institutions of our country exercised an important influence on its social, literary, and religious condition, no one acquainted with the subject is likely to deny; and that the Monastery of Inchcolme had an important influence in these and other ways on our whole neighbourhood, and has many historical associations with which those who live within sight of it ought to be acquainted, will be as readily conceded. It is not, of course, pretended that the Monastery of Inchcolme could vie, in riches or influence, with the great religious houses of our country; but alike in its foundation and its fortunes, it can claim an interest of a kind peculiarly its own. This, I trust, will appear as I attempt to tell you its history. And in trying to reproduce the past I wish to keep in mind how important a thing it is that it should be the living and not the dead past that is called up. It is, I believe, the exclusion of such glimpses of the workings of mind and heart as old records contain that has given rise to the idea that the study of antiquities is necessarily dry and uninteresting; whereas, if the past which is conjured up is the living past—peopled with men and women of flesh and blood, and like feelings with our own—we must admit that what the poet says is true—

> Nor rough nor barren are the winding ways
> Of hoar antiquity, but strewn with flowers.

A few words must be said regarding the island on which the Monastery is built, before we go further. A comparatively small number of those who live in daily view of Inchcolme, or who cannot help occasionally seeing it in crossing the Firth of Forth, are aware with what extraordinary interest the little island is invested. It is not merely that it is one of the 'emeralds chased in gold,' of which Sir Walter Scott has sung, nor that it presents to the antiquary the

mouldering remains of a religious house of the twelfth century. There are memories associated with Inchcolme of a deeper and holier character than these,—memories, as we shall by and by see, which connect it with the martyr-roll of Scottish worthies.

In its ancient name, Aemonia, or Aemona, which is said to signify the Island of the Druids, some have found a trace of the cruel superstition which covered our land before the introduction of Christianity. And when the dark shadows cast by that early superstition had passed away, Aemona continued to be regarded with feelings of mingled reverence and awe by our own countrymen, and even rude rovers from distant lands gazed on its grey rocks and barren soil with something akin to pious emotion. When the Danes—those bold and hardy invaders—made their last effort to subdue our country, and were so signally defeated at Kinghorn, they sought and obtained permission, as early chroniclers tell us, to bury their slain comrades in the island of Aemona; and there, accordingly, many of these Arabs of the deep now lie peacefully enough. It is an interesting thing to find this story of our little island embalmed in the pages of Shakespeare, in his tragedy of *Macbeth*. After the battle, Rosse is represented as going to King Duncan's camp, near Forres, and when the King greets him with the question—

'Whence cam'st thou, worthy Thane?'

Rosse replies—

'From Fife, great King,
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky,
And fan our people cold.
Norway himself, with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, 'gan a dismal conflict:
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit. And, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.'

Duncan. Great happiness!
Rosse. That now,
Sweno, the Norways' King, craves composition;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men,
Till he disbursed, at St. Colme's Inch,
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

This great battle was fought in the eleventh century, and a stone, imbedded in the rising ground a little to the west of the Monastery, is still pointed out as a monument erected to the memory of those Danish warriors. Sir Robert Sibbald, who described it when it was less effaced than it is now, says: 'It is made like a coffin, and very fierce and grim faces are done on both the ends of it. Upon the middle stone, which supports it, there is the figure of a man holding a spear in his hand.' When Grose visited the island in 1789, he found the stone lying on the ground adjacent to the Monastery. 'At present,' says he, 'it is so much defaced by time or weather that nothing like a head can be distinguished at either end; indeed, it requires the aid of a creative fancy to make out any of the sculpture. Something like a man with a spear is seen (by sharp-sighted antiquaries) on the north side; and on the south the figure of a cross.' Grose adds that the stone had been removed from its original position.

In Stewart's metrical translation of Boece's *Chronicle* there is an interesting notice, by an eye-witness, of the appearance of the island, with its stone cross still standing, and the monument which had been erected to the memory of the chieftain of the vanquished Danes:—

Into an isle callit Emonia,
Sanct Colmis Insche now callit is this da,
Quhair that thair banis restis zet to se,
In sindrie partis, in so greit quantitie,
Ouir all the yle, quhilk makis zet sic cummer,
Weill may ye wit y^e^ men were out of number,
Tha banis aucht, quha that can weill considder,
Into ane place war they put all togidder,

As I myself, quhilk hes bene thair, and sene,
Ane corce of stone thair standis on ane grene
Middis the feild quhair that tha lay ilkone,
Besyde the croce thair lyis ane greit stone,
Under the stone, in middis of the plane,
Thair chiftane lyis, quhilk in the feild was slane.

I have already spoken of the introduction of Christianity into our country, and the share Columba had in that blessed work. There can be no doubt that to him, more than any other, the Picts—on the southern boundary of whose ancient kingdom we have our home—were indebted for their knowledge of the Christian religion. He visited Brude, their king, at his fortress, near the modern Inverness; gained his confidence in spite of much opposition, and at length planted Christianity firmly in the province. In the Cupar MS. of the *Scotichronicon* it is affirmed that St. Columba dwelt for some time on the island of Aemona, while he preached to the Scots and Picts, and, if tradition is to be believed, Adamnan, a successor of his in Iona—who has left us a valuable life of Columba—was for some time resident on Inchkeith. It is a singular thing, as Dr. Reeves, the most recent and the best editor of Adamnan, has noticed, how closely situated in our immediate neighbourhood the lands are which are dedicated to these two saints. Aemona, dedicated to St. Columba, is near Inchkeith, devoted to St. Adamnan; and Columba's Cramond lies immediately to the east of Adamnan's Dalmeny. There are traces of no fewer than fifty-five churches and chapels throughout Scotland dedicated to St. Columba, and forty-one have been reckoned up in Ireland.

But you are, I daresay, more interested in the question what doctrines Columba taught than what churches and chapels were dedicated to him. Adamnan's Life of the saint, to which I have just referred, is much disfigured by silly narratives of miracles alleged to have been wrought by

him; but Dr. M'Lauchlan, the historian of the early Scottish Church, has shown that when the history is divested of these puerilities, it is made out, beyond the power of reasonable contradiction, that no worship of the Virgin, or of saints, was sanctioned by Columba; that he gave no countenance to the doctrine of Purgatory; that Extreme Unction formed no part of his creed; and that, although some doubtful phrases do occur in reference to the Lord's Supper, communion at Iona was in both kinds—wine as well as bread being used in its ministration to the people. That many corruptions by and by appeared among the followers of Columba—the Culdees, as they came to be called—is undoubted. But it may be said that, as a rule, they went to the Word of God, and not to the Fathers, for their doctrines, and that they not only rejected many of the peculiar tenets of Rome, but for centuries steadfastly resisted her usurped authority over the Church of Christ.

The first building of a religious kind belonging to the island of Aemona, of which we have any notice, was a little chapel, or oratory, in which an eremite devoted to St. Columba lived and performed his solitary rites. But as this hermit and his cell have to be noticed in connection with the story of the foundation of the Monastery, I pass from them at present with a single remark. A small building, situated in the garden of the Abbey, has recently attracted a good deal of notice, and has even gone through something like a restoration, in the belief that it is the identical oratory in which the Columban eremite worshipped before the Monastery was founded. It was through the enlightened antiquarian zeal of Sir James Simpson that this discovery was made. On architectural grounds, some of the highest authorities on such matters have acquiesced in the conclusion come to by Sir James. And on the supposition that they are correct, the little chapel is probably the oldest stone-roofed building in Scotland.

But the feature to which Inchcolme—the island of Columba—owes its special interest is the Monastery. This institution dates away back to a very early period, and what is known of its foundation first of all demands our notice. The story, as told in the *Scotichronicon*, is from the pen of Bower, the continuator of Fordun's History, and Abbot of Inchcolme, and is in substance this:—About the year 1123, the Monastery of St. Columba, in the island of Aemonia, near to Inverkeithing, was founded in circumstances which were wonderful, nay, even miraculous. For when that noble and most Christian king, Alexander the First, was crossing from Queensferry on business of State, there suddenly arose a violent south-west wind, which drove the vessel down the Firth, in the direction of the island of Aemonia, which the sailors managed to reach with the greatest difficulty. Now, on this island there lived at that time a hermit devoted to the service of St. Columba; and content with the sustenance afforded by the milk of a single cow that pastured on the island, and such shell and other fish as the sea yielded, this hermit regularly performed the rites of worship in a little chapel on the island. On such poor fare as this the King and his attendants, who were not a few, lived contentedly for three whole days, during which the tempest raged with unabated fury. While he was yet at sea, shaken with the fury of the storm, in the midst of danger, and despairing even of life, the King made a vow to St. Columba, to the effect that, if the saint would carry him and his attendants safely to the island, he would leave on it a memorial worthy of his protector, which should at the same time be an asylum and solace to the tempest-tossed and the shipwrecked. And this, says the chronicler, was the occasion of the King's building there a monastery for canons, which is still to be seen.

Now, if we eliminate from this story the miraculous element which had such charms in the eyes of our early chroniclers, there seems nothing incredible in the account it

gives of the foundation of the Monastery. On the contrary, with the single abatement we have named, everything is natural and lifelike, and in perfect keeping with the opinions and usages of the time. Some, indeed, have doubted the accuracy of the statement that the Monastery was founded by Alexander the First; and of late it has become somewhat common to call such statements in question, without being very particular as to the grounds on which the allegation rests. How, then, does the matter really stand?

There is no direct mention made of the founder of the Monastery in any of the original papers connected with it which I have seen, and the date is variously given by the early historians. In Goodall's edition of the *Scotichronicon* it is 1123; in the MS. of Cupar and the MS. of Perth it is 1034; in the *Extracta* it is 1024. It is however to be borne in mind that there are no mistakes so frequently made by transcribers as those affecting dates. Now, it is most evident that the dates 1024 and 1034 are pure mistakes; for the writers who give them ascribe the foundation of the Monastery to Alexander the First, and yet assign to his work dates that belong to a period before his birth. Keeping this in mind, the apparent conflict is diminished. Again, in most of the early chronicles there is to be found one of those jingling rhymes, of which the monks of old were so fond, giving in a few rude Latin lines the date of the foundation of the Monastery, as well as the name of its founder. I shall repeat this monkish conceit to you, for it is fitted to appeal to the ear as well as the eye. It is as follows:—

> M, C, ter I, bis et X, literis a tempore Christi,
> Emon, tunc, ab Alexandro fundata fuisti,
> Scotorum primo, structorem Canonicorum,
> Transferat ex ymo Deus hunc ad astra polorum.

If we take these lines as they are pointed in the Donibristle MS.—which through the kindness of the Hon. John Stuart I had for some time in my possession,—and as

I have given them above, they may be thus roughly translated and rhymed—

> An M, a C, three I's, and X's two,
> These letters keep the year of Christ in view,
> When Alexander, First, gave Emon's isle,
> His kingly gift, a rich monastic pile.
> May God translate the noble Founder's soul
> To regions high above the starry pole.

Now, however trifling these lines may appear, the letters embodied in them can apply only to the year 1123, the date given in the *Scotichronicon*. Many other arguments might be stated which corroborate this position. Statements are to be found in the charters of the Monastery which point to possessions owned by the Canons as far back as the reign of Alexander the First. In a charter of William de Mortimer, about the year 1180, a charter, granted after his unseemly tussle with the Abbot and Canons in the churchyard of Aberdour, he declares that he had it on the testimony of men of the highest integrity, that, as far back as the time of Alexander the First, the church of Aberdour had belonged to the Canons of Inchcolme. The only other argument I shall adduce is one having reference to the known bent of King Alexander's character. Bower states that from his childhood the King's parents had inspired him with reverence for Columba. Ailred, who was a contemporary of the King's, tells us that he was not ignorant of letters, that he was zealous in establishing churches, collecting relics, and providing vestments and books for the clergy; that he was liberal, even to profusion, and took delight in the offices of charity to the poor. In addition to all this, Dr. Reeves has recently published some Latin verses, of the beginning of the twelfth century or thereby, which speak of the great devotion of King Alexander to St. Columba, and the order which the King had given that the triumphs of the saint should be committed to writing. It will be admitted that all this points to just such a person from whom

we might naturally expect such an act of devotion as the foundation of a Monastery, and the dedication of it to St. Columba, as the story of the chronicler sets forth with a garnishing of monkish fable. From a careful consideration of the whole facts and circumstances of the case, too varied and minute to be here detailed, I believe the true state of the case to be, that the Monastery was really founded by Alexander the First, and that he provided the means for beginning the erection of such buildings as were absolutely necessary; but, dying in the following year, he did not completely fulfil his intention of endowing it. This was, however, done by his brother, King David; for one of the charters of the Monastery proves that he made over to Gregory, Bishop of Dunkeld, considerable possessions, to be kept by him for behoof of the Monastery until there should be Canons on the island.

Now that these somewhat dry details are over, I must tell you something of the countenance given by the Pope to the religious house, when, fully fifty years after its actual foundation, it was confirmed in its possessions. The Monastery was confirmed on the 11th day of March 1178, by a Bull of Pope Alexander the Third. But this, in all probability, was not the first Bull of Institution. This Pontiff was a man of great ability, and the date carries us back to within a few years of the murder of Thomas à Becket, and the humiliation of Henry the Second of England at the tomb of the murdered prelate. I think you will be interested in the contents of the Pope's Bull of Protection and Confirmation, and perhaps the best way of introducing you to it is by laying it before you in the form of a free translation. It runs thus:—

'Alexander, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his beloved sons, Walter, Prior of the church of St. Colme's Inch, and his brethren, both present and to come, professing the canonical life:

'To those who have chosen a religious life, it is befitting

that apostolical guardianship should be extended; lest, perchance, the inroad of temerity, in the case of any one, should recall him from his purpose, or invade the binding obligation of our holy religion, which, be it far removed!

'On this account, beloved sons, we have compassionately yielded to your just entreaties, and have taken the above-named church of St. Colme's Inch—of which, by the Divine indulgence, you are possessed—under our protection, and that of St. Peter, and have awarded the privileges enumerated in the following deed:—

'Ordaining, first of all, that the Canonical Order, which is in accordance with the will of God and the rule of St. Augustine, be held worthy of being instituted in the said church, and be inviolably observed there, in all time coming. And further, that whatsoever property the said church at present justly and canonically possesses, or in future, by the blessing of God, shall be able to acquire, by the concession of Popes, the largesses of Kings and Princes, the offerings of the Faithful, or in any other honest way, shall remain firm and sure to your successors. And these possessions we have deemed it right to enumerate in the following specific terms, to wit: The place itself, in which the aforesaid church is situated, with all that pertains to it; the church of Aberdour, with its pertinents; the church of Dalgathin (Dalgety), with its pertinents; the church of Rossive (Rosyth), with the whole land in that town, which Richard, Bishop of Dunkeld, of blessed memory, bestowed in perpetual alms-gift, and confirmed with his own writing; the church of Ochtertule (Auchtertool), with two ox-gates of land; the chapel of Beth (Beath), with its pertinents; Kynmuchin, by its rightful marches; the two Kincarnies, Over and Nether; Kyllori; Glasmonth, as the aforesaid Bishop Richard confirmed it; a half-plough of land near the church of St. Malin, and that chapel itself; Buchedlach, by its rightful marches; what of right ye have in Donybrisle; in Lothian, Lauyn the Lesser, near Earl's Lauyn;

two tofts in Caramonth-on the-Sea (Cramond); a toft in Edenburg (Edinburgh); two tofts in Haddington; two oxgates of land in Middleton; four marks out of the Mill of Caramont; three shillings out of Craigin; a mark out of Waldeve's Kincarnyne (Cockairnie), as his charter confirms it to you; twelve shillings out of the lordship of the King at Kinghorn; a toft in Tibarmore; and 1000 eels out of Strathenry, the gift of Robert de Quincy.

'Assuredly no one may presume to exact tithes of your newly cultivated lands, which you till with your own hands, or at your own charges, or for the nourishment of your cattle.

'We ordain, moreover, that if, at any time, there should be a general interdict on the land, it shall be lawful for you to perform Divine service, in an undertone, with closed doors, and without the ringing of bells—the excommunicated and interdicted being first excluded.

'It shall likewise be lawful for you to receive and retain, without let or hindrance, women who are free and unfettered, and flee from the world for the conversion of their souls.

'Moreover, we forbid that any of your brotherhood, after having assumed the habit of your Order, should leave the Monastery without the permission of the Prior, unless it be for the purpose of assuming the habit of a stricter order. And let no one dare to give shelter to those who depart without a letter from the convent they leave.

'Further, it shall not be lawful for any one to make new or unwonted exactions from you or your churches; or in any way to disturb you without manifest and reasonable cause. Moreover, it shall be lawful for you to make selection of clerks and priests for the parish churches belonging to you, and to present the same to the Bishop of the diocese; and he, if he shall find them fit for the office, shall commit to them the care of souls; and they shall be answerable to him in spiritual matters, but to you in tem-

poral. It shall also be lawful for you to place three or four of your Canons in the churches that belong to you, each one of whom shall receive the care of souls from the Bishop of the diocese, and shall be accountable to him in spiritual matters, and to you in temporal. And we strictly prohibit the Canons, with the single exception of the Prior, from receiving protestations.

'Furthermore, we decree that the sepulture of the foresaid place shall be free to all, unless, perchance, they be excommunicated or interdicted: so that no one may stand in the way of the devotion and last desire of those who shall resolve on being buried there—reserving always the rights of those churches from which the bodies of the dead are thus taken.

'And on the death of you, the Prior of the said place, or of any of your successors, no man may be appointed by stealth, cunning, or violence; but one shall be chosen whom the brethren, by common consent, or that portion of them who are wiser in counsel, shall, in accordance with the fear of God, and the rule of the blessed Augustine, recommend for election.

'And we ordain that it shall not be lawful for any man rashly to disturb the foresaid church by taking away its possessions, or by detaining, diminishing, or obstructing its offerings; but all things belonging to it shall be preserved intact for those persons to whose management, and for whose support, these possessions have been given, the authority of the Apostolic See and the canonical rights of the diocesan Bishop being always respected.

'If, therefore, in time to come, any person, lay or clerical, shall knowingly and wilfully attempt to contravene this charter of institution, let him—unless, after a second or third admonition, he shall acknowledge his fault, and make worthy amends—be treated without the dignity due to his position and rank; and let him know that he is guilty, in the Divine estimation, because of the wrong he has done; and

let him be denied all communion with the most holy body and blood of our God and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ; and, in his last agony, let him be exposed to the Divine vengeance.

'But on all and sundry who respect the rights of the said place, let there rest the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ; so that, in this life, they may reap the fruits of their good deeds, and, in the end, receive the reward of eternal peace at the hands of an unbending Judge. Amen!

'I, Alexander, Bishop of the Catholic Church, subscribe: I, Numaldus, Bishop of Hostia, subscribe: I, John, Presbyter Cardinal of St. John and St. Paul, subscribe. Given, at the Lateran, by the hand of Albert, Presbyter Cardinal and Chancellor of the Holy Roman Church, on the 11th day of March, in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight, and in the twentieth year of the pontificate of our Lord, Pope Alexander the Third.'

Such is the Bull which at length confirmed the full status of a monastery of canons-regular to the church of St. Colme's Inch; such were the privileges which it pleased the Pope to confer upon it; and such the possessions it owned at the beginning of its history.

There are a few things in this Bull to which it may be well, at this stage, to call your attention. You have observed, I doubt not, that it is addressed not to the *Abbot*, but to the *Prior*, of the Monastery; that instructions are given regarding the election of succeeding Priors; and, in short, that there is not a word in it about an Abbot. It is of importance to notice this; for, at a later stage, I shall endeavour to prove, what I have never seen so much as hinted at, that the Monastery of Inchcolme was at first, and down to about the year 1233, a Priory.

You will have marked, also, the clause regarding the sepulture of the place, which has an important bearing on the story that Sir Robert Sibbald tells, about the high price

paid by Sir Alan Mortimer for the right of burial in the church of the Monastery; for which, however, I have been unable to find any authority.

You cannot have failed to wonder at that clause of the Bull which declares that the Prior and Convent are at liberty to receive women fleeing to them for conversion. We must be allowed to think that a monastery filled with celibates was rather a strange place for women to flee to for conversion.

The enumeration of the possessions of the Monastery, in the twelfth century, must also have engaged your attention in no ordinary way. I know no document which has such a degree of interest connected with it, as regards the history of places in our neighbourhood, as that which I have now laid before you. What would we not give to see these places as they then appeared, and what would we not give to see the people who dwelt in them in those early days!

The religious order of the brethren of the Monastery is strictly defined. They must be canons-regular of the Order of St. Augustine, and you are, I daresay, anxious to know something of that Order. In the eighth century, when great corruption had found its way into the so-called Sacred Orders, a new Order arose, who occupied an intermediate place between the monks, or regular clergy, and the secular priests. These were at first called the Lord's Brethren; but at length they took the name of Canons. They adopted, in part, the discipline and mode of life of monks. They dwelt together, ate at a common table, and joined in united prayer at certain hours. They did not, however, take vows upon them to abjure property, as the monks did, and some of them performed ministerial functions in certain churches. The corruption which seems to be inseparable from such a mode of life, when men are shut up in cloisters, and denied the social intercourse which their nature demands, speedily sank the order of Canons as low as the other orders of ecclesiastics in that

dark age. A great effort was made in the eleventh century to reform them, and from that period dates the distinction between canons regular and secular. The seculars lived in the same house, and ate at the same table, but retained the revenues and perquisites of their priestly office. The regulars, on the other hand, renounced all private property, and lived very much after the manner of monks. And as the rule which Ivo, Bishop of Chartres, laid down for the latter coincided, to a large extent, with that which St. Augustine introduced among the clergy, the regular canons were called by many, and loved to call themselves, canons-regular of St. Augustine. Unnatural as the whole monastic system undoubtedly was, setting aside, as it did, the natural instincts of man, and traversing God's arrangement regarding family life ; productive too, as it was, of great evils in our own and other countries, it must still be admitted that the Augustinian Order was comparatively free from many of the abuses that degraded and disgraced the others. It is a remarkable fact, alluded to by Professor Lorimer in his *Life of Patrick Hamilton*, that while few of the secular clergy embraced evangelical doctrines at the period of the Reformation, and almost none of the Franciscans, the Cistercians, the Benedictines, or the Carmelites, many of the Augustinian canons and Dominican friars warmly espoused these doctrines. In this connection the name of Thomas Forret, Vicar of Dollar, and one of the Canons of Inchcolme, casts a halo of glory over our old Monastery, as we shall by and by see more fully.

It is to be borne in mind, then, that the Canons of Inchcolme were of this Order. It was introduced into Scotland by Alexander the First. The members of it were, in the first instance, generally foreigners—either Saxons or French ; and they had, at one time, no fewer than twenty-eight monasteries in our land.

It will be asked if we have any information regarding the appearance presented by the buildings of the Monastery, in

its best days. We do not, of course, enter largely into architectural details in a popular lecture. The Monastery seems to have been famed for its lofty tower and its magnificent church. The tower, which is still standing, is, in its rigid simplicity, a very fine one; and was intended to attract the notice of tempest-tossed sailors to the hospitable shores of the island. From what remains of the other buildings of the Monastery—the beautiful stone-roofed octagonal chapter-house, the Abbot's house, the cloisters, and the refectory, we can easily see that they were of different ages, and of great extent. And their original occupants must have anticipated, for them, a greater exemption from the ravages of time than falls to the lot of most edifices. This we may conclude from a very curious inscription, which is said to have been placed over the door of the church. It ran as follows:—

STET DOMUS HAEC DONEC FLUCTUS FORMICA MARINOS
EBIBAT, ET TOTUM TESTUDO PERAMBULET ORBEM.

These lines may be thus translated:—

Still may these turrets lift their heads on high,
Nor e'er, as crumbling ruins, strew the ground,
Until an ant shall drink the ocean dry,
And a slow tortoise travel the world round.

If this wish is to be regarded as at all prophetic, the walls of the old Abbey, such as they are, have still a considerable period of existence before them. In the absence of any authentic information, it might be rash to say how far short of his journey's end the adventurous tortoise is. He is, no doubt, taking matters uncommonly easy. But, judging from the appearance of the Firth, and what one occasionally hears of the great oceans of the globe, it is safe to infer that the ant has still a good deal of hard work before her.

Frequent mention is made, in the Pope's Bull, of the Bishop of the diocese in which the Monastery was situate; and

perhaps not many of my audience are aware—unless, indeed a sentence in an earlier lecture has made them acquainted with the fact—that not only the Abbey, but the churches of Aberdour, Dalgety, Beath, and others belonging to it, were in the diocese of Dunkeld. How places so far removed from one another came to be thus associated is one of those antiquarian puzzles which are more easily stated than solved. Be this as it may, not only was the Monastery within the diocese of Dunkeld; but several of the Bishops of that See lie buried in the church of the Abbey. Richard de Praebenda, who died at Cramond in 1174, is buried there. There, too, lies another Richard, who died in 1210; and John de Leycester, who died in 1214; as also Gilbert, who departed this life in 1233. Another of the Bishops of Dunkeld, Richard of Inverkeithing, who, before he was elevated to the See, was Chamberlain to the King, and Lord Chancellor some time afterwards, was a great benefactor of the Monastery; and although his body lies at Dunkeld, his heart was buried at the north wall of the choir of the church of St. Colme's Inch, in 1272.

For some time after this, Inchcolme seems to have lost favour as a burying-place for the Bishops of Dunkeld; but, in 1483, James Livingstoun, who was first Dean, and then Bishop, of the See, and also Lord Chancellor, was buried in the church of the Monastery.

But perhaps a notice of a single living Bishop of the diocese would interest you more than the burial of many in the old Abbey church. Permit me, then, to introduce to you William Sinclair, Bishop of Dunkeld, of whom I have already spoken as 'the Fechtin' Bishop.' The complexion of a man's times has often a good deal to do with the moulding of his character; and our somewhat erratic friend, William Sinclair, has this to urge, in extenuation of his eccentricities, that, without being consulted in the matter, he was cast upon the troublous times of Wallace and Bruce. The Bishops of Dunkeld had, at that time, a

baronial residence in our neighbourhood, at Auchtertool. This place came afterwards to be known as Hallyards; and under the still more modern name of Camilla—so named, by one of the Earls of Moray, in compliment to his Countess, who was one of the Argyll Campbells—its walls are now crumbling to dust. William Sinclair was living there in the year 1315, when a party of English, sent to invade Scotland by sea, appeared in the Forth; and, landing at Donibristle, began to lay waste the country in our immediate neighbourhood. The Sheriff of the county, aided, according to Lord Hailes, by Duncan, Earl of Fife, and a train of 500 men, attempted to oppose the English; but, intimidated by superior numbers, they beat a precipitate retreat. When the Bishop heard the report of what had happened, he hastily mounted his horse; and, at the head of sixty of his retainers, set out to the aid of his baffled countrymen. Meeting the Sheriff and his band, who were fleeing in great confusion, the Bishop asked him why he was retreating in such a cowardly way. The Sheriff took refuge under the assertion that the English were more numerous and powerful than they. 'It would serve you right,' cried the Bishop, 'if the King were to order the gilt spurs to be hacked off your heels!' Then, throwing his Bishop's robe away, he snatched a spear, and, putting spurs to his horse, dashed on, crying, 'Follow me!—who loves Scotland, follow me!' His countrymen rallied round him; and, pressing on in the direction of Donibristle, gained an easy victory over the enemy; 'of whom,' says an old chronicler, 'there fell more than 500 men, besides a great number who rushed into a boat, and, overloading it, sank along with it.' When this incident occurred Robert the Bruce was in Ireland, fighting for his brother Edward's advancement to the throne of that country. He soon heard, however, of Sinclair's intrepidity, and exclaimed, 'He shall be my bishop!' And, under the double appellation of 'the King's Bishop' and 'the Fechtin' Bishop,' William Sinclair was long

remembered by his countrymen. Few will regard him as the *beau-idéal* of a bishop; but no one will deny him the distinction of a patriot. I have some reason for thinking that the large upright stone, which stands a little to the west of the south gate leading to Fordell, has some monumental connection with this fight.

I must now lay before you some notices of the brethren by whom the Monastery was peopled through so many centuries; its Priors, and Abbots, and some of its more distinguished Canons. It will, however, I believe, be an agreeable variety for you, before entering on that department of our narrative, to hear of the mysterious powers belonging to Abbots of Inchcolme, as poets have feigned them. A legend used to be told at many a fireside in Fife, of the supernatural way in which an Abbot of our old Monastery restored one of Sir Alan Mortimer's daughters, who had the misfortune to be carried off to the land of the Fairies. This legend has been wedded to verse, by David Vedder, and I shall, with your leave, read it to you, in order that you may have the opportunity of comparing the Abbots of fiction with those of fact. Vedder's lines are these:—

SIR ALAN MORTIMER.

A Legend of Fife.

The morning's e'e saw mirth and glee
I' the hoary feudal tower
Of bauld Sir Alan Mortimer,
The Lord of Aberdour.
But dool was there, and mickle care,
When the moon began to gleam;
For Elf and Fay held jubilee
Beneath her siller beam.

Sir Alan's peerless daughter was
His darling frae infancie,
She bloomed, in her bower, a lily flower,
Beneath the light o' his e'e.

Her eyes were gems, her brow was bright,
Her tresses black as jet;
And her thoughts as pure as the dews of even
On the virgin violet.

The woodbine and the jessamine
Their tendrils had entwined;
A bower was formed, and Emma oft
At twilight there reclined.
She thought of her Knight in Palestine,
And sometimes she would sigh,
For love was a guest in her spotless breast,
In heavenly purity.

The setting sun had ceased to gild
St. Columb's holy tower,
And the vesper star began to glow,
Ere Emma left her bower.
And the fairy court had begun their sport
Upon the daisied lea;
While the gossamer strings of their virginals rang
Wi' fairy melodie.

That night the King had convoked his court
Upon the enamelled green;
To pick and wale, thro' his beauties a',
For a blumin' fairy queen:
An', ere ever he wist, he spied a form
That rivalled his beauties a'—
'Twas Emma—Sir Alan Mortimer's pride,
Coming hame to her father's ha'.

Quick as the vivid lightning gleams,
Amidst a thunder storm;
As rapidly the elf assumed
Lord Bethune's manly form.
As flies the cushat to her mate,
To meet his embrace she flew;
Like a feathered shaft frae a yeoman's bow,
She vanished frae human view.

The Abbey bell, on the sacred isle,
Had told the vesper's hour;
No footsteps are heard—no Emma appears,
Sir Alan rushed from his tower.

The warders they ha'e left their posts,
And ta'en them to the bent ;
The porters they ha'e left their yetts ;
The sleuth-hounds are on the scent.

The vassals a' ha'e left their cots,
And sought thro' bouke and wold ;
But the good sleuth-hounds they a' lay down
On the purple heath and yowled.
Sir Alan was aye the foremost man
In dingle, bouke, and briar ;
But, when he heard his sleuth-hounds yowl,
He tore his thin grey hair.

An' aye he cheered his vassals on,
Though his heart was like to break ;
But, when he saw his hounds lie down,
Fu' mournfully then he spake :
'Unearthlie sounds affright my hounds ;
Unearthlie sights they see ;
They quiver and shake, in the heather brake,
Like the leaves o' the aspen tree.

My blude has almost ceased to flow,
And my soul is chilled wi' fear ;
Lest the elfin or the demon race
Should ha'e stown my daughter dear.
Haste ! haste to the holy Abbot that dwells
On St. Columb's sacred shores ;
An' tell him a son o' the Holy Kirk
His ghostlie aid implores.

Bid him buckle sic spiritual armour on,
As is proof against glamourie ;
Lest the fiends o' night ha'e power to prevail
Against baith him and me.'
The rowers ha'e dashed across the sound
And knocked at the chapel door,
The Abbot was chanting his midnight hymn
St. Columb's shrine before.

His saintlike mien, his radiant e'en,
An' his tresses o' siller grey,
Might ha'e driven to flight the demon o' night,
But rood or rosarie.

The messenger dropt upon his knees,
And humbly thus he said—
'My master, a faithfu' son o' the Kirk,
Implores your ghostlie aid;

And ye're bidden to put sic armour on
As is proof against glamourie;
Lest the fiends o' nicht ha'e power to prevail
Against baith him and thee.'
The Abbot leaped lightly into the boat,
And pushed her frae the strand,
An', pantin' for breath, 'tween life and death,
The vassals rowed to land.

The Abbot has grasped the baron's hand,
'Ha'e patience, my son,' said he,
'For I shall expel the fiends o' hell
Frae your castle and baronie.'
'Restore my daughter,' Sir Alan cries,
'To her father's fond embrace,
And the half o' my gold, this very night,
St. Columb's shrine shall grace.

Yes, if thou 'lt restore my darling child,
That 's from me foully been riven,
The half o' my lands, ere morning's prime,
To thy Abbey shall be given.'
The Abbot replied, with priestly pride,
'Ha'e patience under your loss,
There never was fiend withstood me yet,
When I brandished the holy Cross.

Forego your fear, and be of good cheer,
I hereby pledge my word,
That by Mary's might, ere I sleep this night,
Your daughter shall be restored.'
The Abbot had made a pilgrimage
Barefoot to Palestine,
Had slept in the Holy Sepulchre,
And visions he had seen.

His girdle had been seven times laved
In Siloam's sacred stream;
And holy St. Bride a crucifix hung
Around his neck in a dream;

A bead was strung on his rosarie
That had cured three men bewitched;
And a relic o' the real Cross
His pastoral staff enriched.

He carried a chalice in his hand,
Brimfu' o' water clear,
For his ain behoof that had oozed frae the roof
O' the Holy Sepulchre.
He sprinkled bauld Sir Alan's lands
Wi' draps o' the heavenly dew,
And the fiends o' nicht, wi' gruesome yell,
To their midnight darkness flew.

Anon he shook his rosarie,
And invoked St. Mary's name,
Until sweet Emma's voice was heard
Chantin' the virgin hymn;
But when he brandished the holy Rood
And raised it to the sky,
Like a beam o' light she burst on their sight,
In vestal purity.

Such is the legend of Sir Alan Mortimer's daughter, her theft by the fairies, and her restoration to her father's embrace. And I am sure you will agree with me in thinking that much credit was due to the Abbot of Inchcolme for bringing matters to such a happy issue. There is a peculiar charm in these old stories, which almost all feel; and it would be unpardonable in us not to know what is so interestingly connected, in a literary point of view, with our immediate neighbourhood. Stories of this kind, when draped in the graces of poetry, sometimes exercise a spell of another kind. They frequently set young ladies a-sighing after roods and rosaries and other emblems of a faith which, once all but effete in our country, has of late begun to lift up its head again. Such impressible persons would no doubt be shocked were we to tell them that, after dipping pretty deeply into writings of this kind, we are hard-hearted enough to look on all this

sprinkling of holy water, and shaking of the rosary, and brandishing of the cross, without anything at all akin to that emotion. It affects us, no doubt; but then, by some law of association, we find ourselves immediately afterwards thinking on the feats of the 'Wizard of the North'! It would, however, be unwise to put the Abbots of sober fact in competition with such Abbots as poets have feigned; and so we shall relegate our account of the real Abbots to another lecture.

LECTURE IV.

The Monastery at first a priory, then an abbey—The Augustinian Rule—The dress of the Canons—Bricius and Walter, Priors, and their contemporaries—Michael and Walter, Priors—The unbearable excesses of Prior William—Excellent qualities of Prior Nigel—Henry, the first Abbot—Quarrel about the mill of Aberdour—Abbot Thomas, his reign and resignation—Abbot William, fight about the multures of Cullelo—An appeal to the Pope—Abbot Bricius—Raids and miracles—Abbot Walter—Abbot John Dersy—Abbot Laurence and his edifices—Abbot John—The 'sitting down of the Cardinall'—Abbot Walter Bower—Abbot Michael—Patrick Graham, Archbishop of St. Andrews, a prisoner in the Monastery—Abbot Thomas—Abbot John—Richard Abercromby, the last of the Abbots—The martyr, Thomas Forret, Vicar of Dollar—Sir John Luttrell, Knight and Abbot.

In last lecture I gave a specimen of the Abbots of Inchcolme, as poetry has feigned them; in the present we must pass from the Abbots of fiction to those of fact. Nothing connected with the history of the Monastery, even when dealt with in the homely and popular way in which we are now looking at it, has given me more trouble than the construction of a list of its Abbots. There is scarcely a printed chartulary on which I could lay my hands, that I have not examined with a view to its construction; and yet I am far from supposing that my list is complete.

The first thing to be noticed, in dealing with the Abbots, is the fact, which, so far as I am aware, is stated for the first time in these lectures, that the Monastery of Inchcolme was, at the time of its institution, and for a considerable time afterwards, a Priory; and then settled down under the rule of an Abbot. The difference between a Priory and an Abbey is, in one point of view, not very great; the head of the

Convent, in the case of a Priory, being called the Prior, and the next in order the Sub-Prior: whereas, in an Abbey, the head is called the Abbot, and the next in order the Prior. In another point of view, however, the difference is important and instructive. The tendency of the Papal system, both in regard to the secular clergy and the regular orders, has ever been towards the concentration of power in the hands of a superior. The Great Founder of the Christian faith laid down this rule to His followers: 'One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.' But the very genius of the Papal system is to make some one the master of those who, along with him, ought to be considered brethren. When the divergence begins, he is only the first among equals, but, by and by, he assumes fatherly instead of brotherly functions, and ends by claiming those that are of a lordly kind. Among the regulars the Prior now becomes Abbot; and the Abbot, when it is possible, assumes the rank of the lordly mitred Abbot. Among the seculars, the Presbyter becomes Bishop, and the Bishop after a few intermediate stages becomes Pope,—only a father after all, it may be said, but certainly a father of a lordly kind.

In my first investigations into the history of the Monastery, there seemed to be inextricable confusion in the use of the terms 'Prior' and 'Abbot.' A charter of the Abbey of Dunfermline is quoted by Bishop Keith, in which the head of the Convent is styled Bricius, Abbot of Inchcolme. Then, for a considerable period, the principals of the Convent are designated Priors; and, later still, they appear as Abbots again. Now what is the cause of all this confusion? What I wish I had discovered sooner: simply a mistake on the part of Bishop Keith.

On referring to the Register of Dunfermline, I found Bricius styled *Prior*, and not *Abbot*; and a careful review of the whole facts of the case warrants the assertion, that the Monastery, from the date of its institution down till about the year 1233, was a Priory. Bricius, its first head,

as we have just seen, is styled Prior. In the year 1178, the Bull of Pope Alexander the Third is addressed to Walter, Prior of the Monastery, and his brethren. In this Bull instructions are given as to the mode in which succeeding Priors are to be appointed. And in connection with the deposition of a Prior, which took place in the year 1224, and of which I shall have to tell you something by and by, Bower himself uses the words, 'There was not at that time an Abbot in the Monastery.'

I have so often had occasion to speak of the brethren of the Monastery as Augustinian Canons, and of the rules they followed as the Augustinian Rule, that it may be well to tell you at this stage what that rule was. It varied considerably with the lapse of time; but its substance is to be found in the following regulations.

First.—All private property had to be relinquished by those applying for admission into an Augustinian monastery; and nothing could be taken away by any one who was compelled to leave the Order. Anything in the shape of property offered to any one of the brethren could only be accepted with the approbation of the Prior. Punishment was decreed for contumacy, and all faults and disagreements were to be carried to the head of the convent, to whom also was to be delivered any property that might come into the hands of the canons.

Second.—The Psalms to be sung, and nightly readings, immediately after vespers, were prescribed. Labour was to be engaged in by the members of the convent till about noon, which was usually the dinner hour; and from that time till between two and three o'clock reading was to occupy their time; after which, work was again to be engaged in till vespers, about four o'clock. When the brethren had to go out on any business, two were to go together. No canon was to eat or drink beyond the bounds of the monastery. No idle talk or gossip was to be allowed: a matter in regard to which it would be well for all to follow

the Augustinian Rule. And those who sat working were to be silent,—not so good a regulation this, if the brethren had anything instructive, or even amusing, to say.

Third.—Another rule of the Code was that the brethren should live in the same house, and have their food and clothing distributed by the Superior. Everything was to be held in common. Consideration was to be shown for the infirmity of others; and no one was to hold his head high because of difference of birth. All were to strive to live in concord. Attention was to be given to Divine service at the appointed hours. The churches under their care were not to be put to any secular use. When engaged in singing Psalms, the brethren were to revolve in their minds what they were expressing, and they were to sing nothing that was not enjoined. Fasting and abstinence were on proper occasions to be observed. Those who did not fast in the most rigid way were to take nothing after dinner, except when sick. Reading was to be engaged in, by some one of the brethren, during dinner. When better food than was usually indulged in was given to the sick, the others were not to be discontented; and when those of delicate constitution had better food and clothing bestowed on them, the others were not to fret. The sick were to be treated kindly when ill, but were to return to the ordinary mode of life when well again. The dress they wore was not to be conspicuous. Nothing offensive or unbecoming in gait, dress, or gesture was to be allowed. They were not to fix their eyes on women, even in the church; and if any letters or presents were found in their possession, they were to be punished for it. Their labour was to be for the common good. Clothing given them by relatives was to be stored in the common vestiary. The same punishment was to be awarded to concealment as was due to theft. Their clothes were to be washed, and they themselves were to bathe, when ordered by the Superior. They were to perform with good-will the duties assigned to

them. The books belonging to the Monastery were to be had only at stated hours. The brethren were to avoid quarrelling and litigation, and to be kind and forgiving. The Superior was to be firm, but, if possible, to rule by love rather than by fear. And the code of laws, of which I have given you the substance, was to be read in presence of the Canons once a week.

In short, the Rule is strikingly suggestive of the regulations we might expect in a modern well-ordered boarding-school for boys. The Canons were to behave themselves as boys properly brought up are at the present time expected to do; and if they did not, they were to be punished.

The dress of the Augustinian Canons, I may mention, was a white tunic with a linen gown, under a black cloak, and a hood covering the head, neck, and shoulders.

In calling your attention now to the heads of the Monastery—its Priors and Abbots—it is a matter of regret that so little can be said about many of them. There are not many outstanding names among them. Indeed, if we except Walter Bower, one of the Abbots, and Thomas Forret, one of the Canons, the list does not present to us any names that can be truly said to be historical; and, regarding many of them, all that we know is that they became Abbots of Inchcolme, held office for a time, and then died and made way for others.

This is nearly all that can be said regarding BRICIUS, the first of the Priors. He was a contemporary of Gregory, Bishop of Dunkeld, who was a great friend to the Monastery. Bricius was also contemporary with Andrew, Bishop of Caithness, and Robert, Abbot of Scone. But when, and by whom, he was appointed, and how long he held office in the Monastery, we cannot say. This we know, that he must either have died, or been removed to some office of a similar kind elsewhere, before 1178. For in that year, as we have seen, the Pope's Bull of Protection is addressed to

WALTER the Prior, who consequently must then have been the head of the Convent. Walter was the contemporary of John Scotus, Bishop of Dunkeld; and of Richard, who succeeded him in that See. He was also the contemporary of William, Bishop of St. Andrews; Thomas, the Prior of St. Andrews; and John, the Prior of the convent on the Isle of May. Walter did not end his days on Inchcolme, having been chosen Abbot of Holyrood in 1210. The next Prior was MICHAEL, who before his election had been one of the Canons of Scone—a monastery which also owed its foundation to the munificence of Alexander the First. But Michael did not long enjoy the honours of his office, or feel its cares, as he died the following year, 1211. When this event took place, the brethren of the Monastery seem to have resolved not to go so far for their next Prior; for they elect to that office one of their own number, SIMON by name, who had hitherto occupied the place of Sub-Prior. Simon must have died before, or in, the year 1224; for in that year we find WILLIAM elected to the office of Prior. He had before his election been a Canon of Holyrood; and in the office to which he was now promoted he seems to have given the reverse of satisfaction. Indeed, the Monastery of Inchcolme in the year 1224 is quite in a state of ferment on account of the many and unbearable excesses of Prior William; and matters have come to such a point that the Canons have resolved on bearing the burden of his tyranny no longer. But how is this resolution to be carried out, good Canons of Inchcolme? On this subject we get a little light. They first of all lodge a complaint with the diocesan Bishop, Matthew of Dunkeld. Then—for they evidently wish to have two strings to their bow—they lay their complaint before the King, Alexander the Second. And they speak out like men, these Augustinian Canons of Inchcolme of more than six centuries ago, and declare that they have made up their minds, and are not to be shaken in their resolution, that, rather than settle down in submission to

William, their Prior, they will throw their canonical vestments away, and go back to the world, and don mailed armour if need be, and ply the sword instead of the pen. Well and nobly said! It is a right enough thing for a community to have a head, be he prior or abbot, or whatever else he may be called, provided that he is looking out, and planning, and working, for the general good. But if he fails to do this, or, worse still, does the reverse of it, why, he must simply be told that his services are to be dispensed with! This is just the course which the Canons mean to pursue. King Alexander has first a few words in private with this obstreperous Prior; and then the Bishop has some dealing with him; and both of them find that his behaviour has been most objectionable. So Prior William is told—in the gentlest possible manner for the times, we doubt not, but yet so clearly as to leave no doubt as to the meaning of it—that his services are no longer needed on St. Colme's Inch. The Prior, of course, sees things in a different light, and finds it hard to be convinced of the propriety of this measure. But when King and Bishop are resolved, and the Canons have their minds made up, what can the Prior do but see his duty summed up in the one word—Walk! And we have to tender our somewhat late congratulations to the members of the Convent on William's departure.

When Prior William had been thus disposed of, the brethren chose as his successor NIGEL, a Canon of the Monastery of Jedward, as Jedburgh was then called. Nigel had occupied the place of cellarer in the Monastery there. He has a high character given him in the *Scoti-chronicon*, as a man of exalted life and great wisdom, who mingled in due proportion the good qualities of religion in the cloister, devotion in the church, prudence in temporal matters, and playfulness in his jokes and other speeches; and it would appear that he not only displayed these traits of character himself, but led those who were under him to do likewise. It is not too much to believe that the Convent,

after their recent hard experience, rejoiced under Nigel's rule, for 'Jeddard justice,' it is to be hoped, had not yet come into play.

Nigel appears to have been the last of the Priors; for the next head of the Convent with whom we come in contact is HENRY, who is designated Abbot of St. Colme's Inch. What the circumstances were which led to this change, and by what means it was brought about, we have no means of knowing. Henry was Abbot in the year 1233, as we learn from one of the charters of the Monastery, which tells how a quarrel was composed, which had arisen regarding the mill of Aberdour. And as nothing of more importance than this has come down to us connected with Henry's tenure of office, I shall tell you about this dispute; for I suppose that even the settling of a controversy about the dues of a mill, which took place eighty years before the battle of Bannockburn, cannot fail to have some interest for us.

The place, to the west of our village, which we know as Couston, then called Colston, belonged to Robert of Rossive (Rosyth); and Balmule, then called Balmacmoll, along with Montequi, in the north part of the parish, belonged to Roger of Balmacmoll, who was married to Christiana, the sister of Robert of Rossive. It is necessary to say further, that Colston, Balmacmoll, and Montequi were all thirled to the mill of Aberdour; in other words, were obliged to get their grinding done there, and quietly pay the miller his dues. Now the mill of Aberdour seems at that time to have belonged to the Monastery of Inchcolme. William de Mortimer had, in the preceding century, made over to the Monastery fifty-two acres of land in Aberdour, as well as the half of the profits of the mill; and I suppose, on the principle that it is needless to make two bites of a cherry, the brethren of the Inch soon got the whole of these profits. Be this as it may, there is a dispute about the thirlage of Aberdour mill in the year of grace

1233,—Robert and Roger, along with Christiana, Roger's wife, being ranged on the one side, and the Abbot Henry and his Canons on the other. How long the storm raged we cannot precisely tell. But at length, after the fashion of the time, there is a gathering of wise heads, to whom the matter is referred, and whose award is to be final. Among the magnates are seen William, Abbot of Dunfermline; Henry, Prior of Culenross (Culross); Peter de Ramsay, who afterwards became Bishop of Aberdeen; John de Haya, Sheriff of Fife, and Archibald de Douglas. And these most grave and potent seigniors, having heard both sides, settle the controversy in this fashion :—Robert of Rossive and his heirs are to pay eight shillings yearly to the brethren of the Monastery, as the mill-dues of the lands of Colston; and after doing this, they are to be left free to grind their corn where they please, and even to build a mill for themselves on their own ground, if they feel inclined to do so, and be free from all further exactions as regards the mill of Aberdour. Moreover, Roger of Balmacmoll, and his wife Christiana, and their heirs for ever, are to have the right of grinding the grain of the lands of Balmacmoll and Montequi, as far as the twenty-first sack, at the mill of Aberdour; and are to be free from any exaction for the repair of the said mill. And in order that the matter may remain thus firmly settled, a document narrating the agreement is forthwith prepared, and has appended to it the seals of Gilbert, Bishop of Dunkeld; of William, Abbot of Dunfermline; of the Convent of Inchcolme; of Robert of Rossive; of Roger of Balmacmoll; and even of Christiana his wife, who seems to have had a seal of her own—which shows how much woman's rights were respected in our neighbourhood as far back as the thirteenth century! And all these most imposing formalities were gone through in presence of the Prior of Culenross, Mr. Peter de Ramsay, John de Haya, Philip de Sancto [Philiberto], who was at that time the proprietor of Cullelo,

Michael Scot—I suppose the famous medicinar and magician of Balwearie,—Maurice de Kyndelloha, Simon de Horrock, David Dorward, Duncan de Ramsay, Nicolas of Balran, and many others. And so that business is settled, as the document assures us, *for ever*. But if the heirs of Roger and Christiana chanced to be still extant and resident at Couston and Balmule, and were to come down to Aberdour some of these days to grind their corn, they might search long and wearily without finding the mill. And so these old charters find a voice, which tells us that by and by we, with our projects and arrangements, shall have passed away; and only the curious searchers into old documents will come across our names, if even they survive! We shall meet these de Ramsays of Balmule at a later stage of our researches, and shall find that some of their representatives in our own day—of the family of the Ramsays of Bamff—hold a high place in the world of letters.

Abbot Henry resigned the care of the Monastery in the year 1244. Whether the weight of years rendered him unfit for the discharge of his duties, or whether it was that he became weary of the quiet, monotonous, and unnatural kind of life worn out on the little island, we cannot tell. Probably the former conjecture is that which is nearest the truth, as he died soon after his resignation. The Abbot THOMAS was chosen to wield the rod of authority over the little community which Henry had just laid down. All that we can discover of the reign of Thomas is, that it was praiseworthy. One authority tells us that he was a man of high morality; another that he was noted for his extensive knowledge; while a third assures us that he was renowned for his sanctity. After ruling over the Monastery for about fourteen years, he too resigned his charge, in the year 1258. It is not at all unlikely that some misunderstandings, and jealousies, and heartburnings had crept into the little society on Inchcolme, which may have been the cause of these repeated resignations. When storms without raged

for days and even weeks, keeping the brethren close prisoners on the little island, their energies must have become sadly compressed; and this might lead to tempests within the Monastery. When men make a small world for themselves, and insist on shutting the great world out, they are invariably sufferers for so doing; and indeed it is in great mercy that the principle is so widely diffused, that unnatural institutions carry within them the seeds of decay.

After Thomas came another Abbot, WILLIAM. He was chosen to fill the office on St. Petronilla's Day—the 31st of May—1258. 'And who,' you will ask, 'was Petronilla?' She is fabled to be the daughter of St. Peter; and it is said that she was cured of a fever, at Rome, through the intercession of the disciples with her father. All this would, I am sure, be news to St. Peter, if he could only be told it; but this does not hinder many in Popish countries from believing the story, and invoking St. Petronilla's aid when suffering from fever. Abbot William not only had the good fortune to be elected on St. Petronilla's Day, but he received the blessing of Richard of Inverkeithing, Bishop of Dunkeld, at Cramond, on St. Columba's Day, which, from the date of your Fair-day, you know to be the 9th of June, old style. During William's term of office a good many contests were waged regarding the possessions of the Monastery. These skirmishes are exceedingly interesting, on account of the glimpses of old-world life and manners which they give us. Let us look at one or two of them.

In the year 1277 there is again a dispute in connection with the mill of Aberdour, and the multures due to it. The mills belonging to baronies and monasteries in days of old were frequently the occasion of great oppression, not merely to the peasantry, but also to the subordinate possessors of land. As regards the peasantry you might suppose that, grinding with their own hand-querns, they would be independent of both mill and miller. But there are old Statutes which tell us that the use of querns, or hand-mills, was only

allowed in stress of weather; and that those who were found using them in other circumstances were liable to have them taken from them, and so be compelled to grind at the public mill. In some cases tenants were bound to help in bringing the mill-stones home. The mode in which they did this was to put a pole through the opening in the centre of the stone, and trundle it along the road, which was many a time the reverse of smooth. We can conceive that it was a high day in the village when new mill-stones had to be brought home, one relay of stalwart men relieving another, as they became heated and tired with their heavy and rough work, especially after trundling the stones uphill. It is not, however, with the peasantry of Aberdour, but with the proprietor of the lands of Cullelo, that the contest is waged which we have now to look at. Thomas de Philiberto, it appears, was proprietor, not only of Cullelo, but also of other lands in the neighbourhood of Aberdour, in 1277; and these lands, he tells us, he had received as a gift from Richard Seward. It is, I suppose, too much to expect that we should have been told in the old document who this Richard Seward was, and why he made over his lands as a gift to Thomas de Philiberto; but, in spite of this, we wish we had got this information. There has been a quarrel between Thomas and the Convent of Inchcolme about the multures of these lands of his. But now it is agreed that Thomas shall pay every year fourteen shillings of silver to the Abbot and Convent,—seven of which shall be forthcoming at the Feast of St. Martin, or Martinmas as we now call it; and the other seven at the Feast of Pentecost, that is, Whitsunday. And the most stringent conditions are attached to the agreement, as far as Thomas is concerned; for if the said silver shillings are not duly paid, by him or his successors, the Abbot and Convent are to be at liberty to help themselves to whatever they can lay their hands on, belonging to the delinquents, until they have received what is equivalent to the sum due to them. But it is also stipu-

lated that the payment of the aforesaid fourteen shillings yearly shall relieve Thomas, and his heirs and successors, of all exactions and demands for repairing the mill and the mill-pond. As was common in the case of such agreements, two copies were written : one of which, with Thomas's seal attached, was kept by the Abbot and Canons ; and the other, with the seal of the Convent appended, was given to Thomas. And the names of those who were witnesses to the agreement are embodied in the document. These were —Radulphus, Abbot of Dunfermline ; David de Lochore ; Radulphus de Lashelis ; Duncan of Crambeth ; Walter of Strathenry ; Simon de Orrock ; Hugh de Lochore ; William de Fessicart, and many others.

Sometimes the quarrels that arose regarding the possessions of the Monastery took a wider sweep than this, and the noise connected with them travelled all the way to Rome. Of this kind was a dispute between the Convent and William de Haya of Lochorret—a place now known as Borthwick—regarding the lands of Caldside, which he withheld from them. In this case appeal was made to the Pope, Urban the Fourth ; and he appointed the Prior of Dunfermline and the Dean of Dunkeld to be judges in the matter. The case came on for trial at Scone, on the first day after Trinity Sunday, in the year 1263. The Monastery was represented by Lambert, one of the Canons ; and, as generally happens in such cases, William de Haya had to succumb.

The next Abbot of whom we have found any notice is BRISIUS, BRICIUS, or BRICE. He lived in the troublous times of John Baliol, between the occurrence of the sad death of Alexander the Third and the final victory of Bruce,—a period in the history of our country full of the direst calamities, yet irradiated by the noblest displays of valour and patriotism, which, in the goodness of God, were at length crowned with unfading liberty. For this happy issue, however, we are in no way indebted to Brice ; for

he and Adam, the Prior of Inchcolme, swore fealty to Edward the First of England, at Berwick, on the 28th day of August 1296; and thereupon the Abbot had letters to the Sheriffs of Fife, Roxburgh, Perth, and Edinburgh, for restoration of his estates in those shires.

After Brice's time a considerable period elapses ere we again fall on traces of the Abbots of Inchcolme. This, no doubt, is to be attributed to the unsettled state of the country at that unhappy time. It was during this period that those invasions occurred by means of which the English hoped to subdue our native land. Of these I need not further speak in general terms. But it falls within our sphere to notice how greatly the Monastery of Inchcolme suffered from such invasions. They are most vividly described in the pages of the *Scotichronicon*, the accounts being sprinkled all over with the diamond dust of the miraculous, in accordance with the rude belief and spirit of the time. I may say, however, that the charters of the Monastery, as well as the pages of Bowmaker, Boece, and Buchanan afford unmistakable proof of the reality and sad results of these incursions.

The first of them occurred in the year 1355, during the turbulent reign of David the Second, when King Edward the Third, along with Edward Baliol, invaded Scotland with a great army and a numerous fleet. One of the vessels of this fleet, manned, it would appear, by more daring seamen than the others could boast of, paid a visit to St. Colme's Inch. And these English rovers were so daring as to steal the very images belonging to the Monastery, one of the patron saint himself sharing no better fortune than those of inferior sanctity. This rather unusual cargo having been taken on board, the sacrilegious crew turned their prow in the direction of home. Other English vessels studded the waters of the Firth on the same track, and a favouring breeze sped them on; but it fared otherwise with the one laden with the spoils of the Monastery. Winds

shook and waves tossed it, to such a degree that its unlucky crew expected every moment to go to the bottom. Before a merciless wind their vessel scudded, till they neared Inchkeith, and now the horrors of a lee-shore stared them in the face. It will not be wondered at that, in these circumstances, the cause of their misfortunes began to dawn on them; nor will it excite surprise that, being so near the rocks, they confessed their crime to St. Columba, and promised his offended saintship that they would make all honourable amends if he would only let them off on that solitary occasion. The effect was instantaneous! They were at once, and in a most unexpected way, led into a quiet haven at Kinghorn. And it should be noted as creditable, in the circumstances, to these Southrons, that they did not forget in the calm the vows they had made in the storm. They unloaded their ship of the images and other spoils which they had wrongfully taken, and sent them back, with a handsome present of gold and silver, to the brethren of Inchcolme. And the right thing being done, they were not long in bringing up leeway, for a friendly breeze began to blow, and they rounded St. Abb's Head before the other vessels knew what they were about.

It would appear, however, that the English were not easily and all at once to be taught respect for the saint and his belongings. For, in the following year, a number of Southern pirates cast anchor in the Firth, and plundered the whole coast as far as the Ochils. They even entered the church of Dollar, which lay a considerable way inland, and laid theftuous hands on a beautifully carved wainscot with which the Abbot had lately adorned the choir; for the church belonged to the Monastery. This wainscot they were at pains to take to pieces; and they put it aboard ship, with the laudable view, no doubt, of making it do service in the South,—an interesting instance of English appreciation of Scottish art at that early period! This being done, they set sail. And great was the glee with which these sacri-

legious pirates steered down the Forth. They laughed and shouted, they sang and danced, they played on such musical instruments as they had—perhaps, among the rest, bagpipes which they had stolen! But their mirth was destined to be shortlived. St. Columba was scarcely prepared to stand all this jeering and flouting; and he was on the watch for them. Accordingly, as they were merrily sailing past the Monastery, on the south side of the island, down went ship, pirates, and plunder, like a shot, to the bottom of the sea! The sailors belonging to the other vessels were, as in the circumstances was to be expected, a good deal alarmed at this summary way of dealing with their comrades; and there and then they volunteered a vow that they would never again interfere with the Monastery or its inmates, nor, in fact, with anything belonging to such a dangerous saint. I suppose it was some of these rovers, after they reached home, and got their feet firmly planted on shore, who gave the saint the nickname of 'St. Quhalme,' as the old chroniclers tell us. He certainly seems to have had the power of raising rather unpleasant qualms in the consciences of those who interfered with his Monastery.

Good lessons are, however, not easily taught; and in many cases they are soon forgotten. So you will not be surprised to hear that, in 1384, the English are at their old tricks again, and are once more giving trouble to the brethren of the Monastery. This time they are evidently bent on mischief as well as plunder; for a shed near the Abbey church is in flames, and, to all appearance, the destruction of the whole Monastery is inevitable. A great multitude of people—inhabitants of Aberdour, no doubt—have assembled on the mainland, at Bernehill—the site of the present St. Colme House—and, with excited feelings, watch the fortunes of the Monastery. Some are in fear that it will be entirely reduced to ashes; others fall on their knees, and implore St. Columba to take pity on his own church,—when, wonderful to relate, the wind suddenly

veers round, and blows back the flames; and the church remains uninjured! Failing in their designs on the church, the Englishmen return to their ships, laden with booty; and, exasperated by their defeat, and stung by it to further mischief, they make for Queensferry, where they set fire to a house, and play many other wild and lawless pranks. By this time, however, they had got wellnigh to the end of their *tether*; for, as St. Columba would have it, they fell in here with Thomas and Nicholas Erskine, and Alexander Lindsay, coming from the east, attended by thirty horsemen; and William Conyngham of Kilmaurs, coming from the west, with thirty horsemen. A bloody combat ensued, and, as was to be expected, the Scots gained the victory. Many of the English were slain; others were taken captive; and others still, betaking themselves to the sea, in the hope of reaching their ship, were drowned. About forty of them, and those the most forward of the incendiaries, clung for safety to the cable attached to the anchor, when a sailor, dreading the attack of the Scots, cut the cable with an axe, whereby all those who clung to it were drowned.

But what more than anything else showed the vigilance of St. Columba remains to be told. He who had planned the mischief, and had set fire to the church of the Monastery, was taken prisoner by Conyngham of Kilmaurs. And when he was captured, a sudden frenzy seized him; and gnashing his teeth, he cried with a most unearthly voice, 'Oh! St. Columba, thou scorchest me, and provest thyself a terrible avenger!' While in this state—a circumstance which does not seem to have impaired his testimony in the eyes of the chronicler—he declared that, when the church was on fire, he had seen St. Columba extinguishing the flames; and that the saint made some of the fire dart out on him, which burnt off his beard and eyebrows. His fury increased to such a pitch, however, that, as the chronicler rather coolly says, it was found necessary to kill him; and he lies buried in the middle of a cross-road, near the town of Dunipace.

Resuming our account of the Abbots, the next I have to notice after Brice, is WALTER; and all I know of him is that, about the year 1420, Sir James Douglas, Lord of Dalkeith, and grandfather of the first Earl of Morton, gave to him, as head of the Convent, the lands of Brego, in the parish of Aberdour, for behoof of the Monastery. It is interesting to notice that this substantial gift was bestowed on the ground of the singular favour Sir James had for the Monastery, and also for its patron saint, Columba.

Walter was succeeded by JOHN DERSY. He had been one of the Canons of Cambuskenneth Abbey; and, after presiding over the Abbey of Inchcolme, he died on the 8th of September 1394. Father Hay speaks of him as a man held in veneration because of his learning and his religious life. He appears to have been succeeded in his office by LAURENCE. In his time there was an important addition made to the buildings of the Monastery. This was the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was built at the south side of the choir of the Abbey church. The chapel was founded in the year 1402, and its erection was mainly due to the industry of Richard of Aberdeen, the Prior, and Thomas Crawford, one of the Canons. A few years later, in 1408, we find an arrangement entered into between Laurence and Robert de Cardeny, Bishop of Dunkeld, at Auchtertool—in the now ruined house of Hallyards, no doubt—by which the lands of Donibristle, which had hitherto belonged to the bishopric of Dunkeld, were given over to the Monastery, in exchange for Cambo and Clarberston, in the parish of Cramond.

JOHN seems to have succeeded Laurence; at least he fills the office of Abbot in 1409, as appears from an old charter of the lands of Cambo. Another of those singular incidents, into which the chroniclers have imported the miraculous element, seems to have taken place during John's term of office. Archibald, the fourth Earl of Douglas, having escaped from captivity in England, went

aboard ship, accompanied by an honourable band of attendants, with the view of proceeding to the Continent; but, as often as the prow of his vessel was turned in that direction, it was beaten back by contrary winds. At length the cause of the hindrance was discovered, and, acting on the advice of his companion-in-arms, Henry St. Clair, second Earl of Orkney, he devoutly approached the island of Aemona, and, having made a worthy offering to St. Columba, he again went on board. And now all went well; for a favouring breeze sprang up, and he speedily reached his destination!

Before leaving these stories, which have so much of the flavour of the miraculous in them, it is but fair to say that it is not in the pages of monkish chroniclers alone that we find countenance given to the idea of the supernatural, as somehow peculiarly connected with Inchcolme. Old Calderwood the historian, so staid and sure-footed on other ground, hardly avoids tripping when he comes within the influence of this 'enchanted isle.' Writing about the events of 1548, when French influence was at work, in many forms, to frustrate the cause of the Reformation, he says:—'Manie other things occurred at this time, which we omitt. But the sitting down of the shippe called the Cardinall, the fairest shippe in France, betwixt Sanct Colme's Inche and Cramund, in a fair day and calm weather, is remarkable. God would let us see that the countrie of Scotland can bear no Cardinalls.' I am sure you will agree with me that when the very *name* proves so disastrous, it would be foolhardy to trust the *reality* so far north!

The next Abbot, WALTER BOWER or BOWMAKER, was the most celebrated of them all. He was born at Haddington in 1385, and, after studying philosophy and theology, went to Paris, where he was instructed in the laws. Having returned to his native country, he was elected Abbot of Inchcolme in the year 1418. He was

employed on some occasions in business connected with the State, as well as the Church; but his chief distinction is due to his historical labours as the continuator of Fordun's *Scotichronicon*. Fordun's work is one of the fountains of Scottish history, and, in the form in which it has come down to us, it owes much to Bower. Fordun did not live to complete his work. He wrote only five of the sixteen books which compose the history, thus bringing it down only to the death of David the First. And, although he left a mass of materials for the later part of the history, down till the year 1385, to Bower belongs the credit of continuing the work till the death of James the First in 1437. And he not only wrote, partly from Fordun's collections, the remaining eleven books of the history, but made a good many additions to the part which the earlier chronicler had written. To this task he is said to have been impelled by the advice of Sir David Stewart of Rosyth. And there can be no doubt that by his literary labours Bower has conferred a great boon on his countrymen, and has thrown an amount of interest around the Monastery which he governed, that otherwise would not have belonged to it. The stories regarding the miraculous interposition of St. Columba, on behalf of Inchcolme, have revealed Bower's superstition; but this is the fault of the time as much as of the man. Listen to one of his more serious utterances. Writing in reference to the events of 1385, he says: 'In this same year I, who have composed these sentences, and who throughout the first books am called *Scriptor* (the writer), was born into the world. Oh! that I might ere long leave it in purity. I die daily; seeing every day a part of my life is taken away. I have passed through five of the great periods of man's life; and it seems to me as if the time past of my life had glided away as yesterday; and, while I spend this very day, I divide it with death.' It is the old story. Earth's water-springs cannot slake the soul's thirst. But Bower no

doubt had heard of the unfailing recipe: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.' I have notices of him as alive and still acting as Abbot, in 1442.

It was in Bower's time that the Monastery received rather a remarkable prisoner, in the person of Euphemia, the daughter of Walter Leslie, Earl of Ross, and mother of Alexander, Lord of the Isles. It is on all hands agreed that the son had been guilty of great oppression and cruelty, on account of which he was imprisoned. Having been set at liberty, he rebelled again, and surprised and burnt the town of Inverness. On submitting, with a rope about his neck, to the king, James the First, at Holyrood, his life and private estate were granted him; but that he might do no more harm, he was kept in custody in Tantallon Castle, and his mother, who was accused of inciting him to mischief, was imprisoned on Inchcolme.

Boece makes mention of JOHN LITTESTAIR as 'Coenobiarcha,' or head of the Convent of Inchcolme, about this time; but his statement is so vague that I hardly know what to make of it. He speaks of him as being appointed to this office after the return of James the First from England; but Bower was Abbot for a considerable time after that event; and so the statement must remain surrounded by haze till further evidence turns up.

About this time, too, Father Hay speaks of another Abbot of Inchcolme, who made his obedience to the Bishop of Dunkeld, but he seems to have mistaken the Abbot of I-colm-kill (Iona) for the Abbot of Inchcolme; as the poet Crabbe is said to have worked himself up to a state of 'fine frenzy,' at the sight of our little island, under the misapprehension that it was Iona.

There can be no doubt that MICHAEL was Abbot of Inchcolme in 1474, for his name occurs in charters of that year connected with the foundation of the Hospital of St. Martha, the history of which I have told you. In all likelihood this is the Abbot of whom Lesley tells us that he was

on board Bishop Kennedy's barge when it was wrecked on the English coast, near Bamborough. Spared by the sea, the Abbot fell into the hands of an inhospitable Englishman. But perhaps I am doing the men of that nation a wrong, in supposing that one of them would act towards the Abbot as this man did. From his name James Carr or Carrick, it may be that he was a renegade Scotsman, one of the most contemptible of all characters. Be this as it may, Carrick evidently considered himself fortunate in having captured a live Abbot; and although there was no war between the two countries at the time, he refused to part with his captive for a less consideration than £80 sterling, in the shape of ransom. This seems to have been about the market value of an Abbot of Inchcolme at that time, when brought to the hammer in England. Michael was alive in the year 1486.

In Michael's time the Monastery of Inchcolme could boast of having within its walls one of the most excellent of men, although he came to it, and remained all the time he was in it, a prisoner. This was Patrick Graham, Archbishop of St. Andrews, who may fairly be called a Scottish Reformer before the Reformation. Spotswood, in his life of the Archbishop, states that, in addition to all the other persecutions which this good man unjustly suffered, from the corrupt faction who at that time had sway about the King—James the Third,—he was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. And the historian adds, 'All these crosses this innocent Bishop suffered most patiently, which his adversaries perceiving, they procured him to be put in close prison, within the Isle of Inchcolme, where he had four keepers watching him, that he should not escape. War afterwards breaking out with England, out of a fear that the English navy (which was then at sea) might fall upon the isle, he was transported to Dunfermline, and from thence to the Castle of Lochleven, where at last he died. This end had that worthy man, in virtue and learning inferior to

none of his time, oppressed by the malice and calumnies of his enemies, chiefly for that they feared reformation of their wicked abuses by his means.' After this statement, Spotswood proceeds to give a very dark picture of the period: 'All things went now, in the church, daily from ill to worse.' 'At Court benefices were sold, or then bestowed as rewards upon flatterers and the ministers of unlawful pleasures; and in the church, Canonical elections, especially in the Monasteries, were quite abrogated, so that the Monasteries, which were founded for pious and charitable uses, came by little and little into the hands of secular men, who having had their education in the Court, brought with them from thence the manners thereof; shaking off all care of discipline, and neglecting the duties of hospitality. This begat great offences, and made the foundations themselves abhorred, partly through the dissoluteness of those that lived in the places, and partly because men saw them converted to other and contrary uses than the first founders had appointed. Neither were the Monasteries only corrupted, but the whole ecclesiastical state became also infected, ignorance and impiety everywhere prevailing, till in the end, the laity putting their hands to the work, made that violent and disordered Reformation, whereof in the next book we shall hear.' Spotswood, in the above passage, has given the best possible reason for the laity putting their hands to the work of reformation, seeing that the ecclesiastics were either unwilling or unable to enter on it; and if the fabric was as rotten as the historian describes it, he need not have whined over the vigour with which it was overthrown. The persecution of Archbishop Graham had, no doubt, its own share in bringing about the Reformation. From a paper found in the Morton collection, it appears that he was one of the Grahams of Fintry. He lies buried in St. Serf's Isle, Lochleven.

On the 18th of March 1500, THOMAS is Abbot of St. Colme's Inch; for on that day King James the Fourth, whose name never fails to call up the melancholy remem-

brance of Flodden field, granted a charter to Thomas and his brethren of the Convent, erecting Aberdour-wester into a burgh of barony.[1]

My notices of the Abbots of Inchcolme are now rapidly drawing to a close. After Thomas lay down to sleep under the floor of the Abbey Church, JOHN was elected Abbot. The only notice of him which I have found is in a charter contained in the Canongate Protocol book, Edinburgh, and has reference to a tenement there, belonging to the Monastery of Inchcolme. The date of the charter is 27th November 1521. The next and last Abbot of Inchcolme was Richard Abercromby, who held that office in the year 1543, but I cannot tell how long before. In the absence of undoubted evidence, I shall not make any positive assertion on the matter, but in all likelihood this is the Abbot during whose tenure of office Thomas Forret was a Canon of the Monastery of Inchcolme, and from whom he received so much kind consideration.

Among the many who laid down their lives for Reformation principles in Scotland, there is hardly one whose name calls up such pure, deep, and tender emotion, in the hearts of his countrymen, as Thomas Forret, on whose history we must now dwell for a little. The cause of this interest is easily discovered. Maintaining the truth regarding the way of salvation, at a time when comparatively few of his countrymen knew it, he belongs to that interesting period, the morning of the Scottish Reformation. After brief but diligent and successful labours in his own quiet sphere, in spreading the truth, he was called upon to seal his testimony with his blood, nearly a quarter of a century before the reformed religion was acknowledged by the nation.

There were also blended in the character of the man, and displayed by him in all the positions he occupied—in the cloister, in the vicarage, and at the stake,—such noble and beautiful characteristics, that his memory cannot but

[1] See Appendix II.

be loved as well as revered. And although the details of his life and sufferings which have come down to us are meagre, they yet reveal in so striking a way the ignorance and cruelty of his enemies, as to draw out the sympathies of the heart to the martyr, and set in clear relief the blessings of the Reformation.

Thomas Forret was a gentleman by birth. His ancestors, from at least the time of William the Lion, had owned the estate of Forret, from which they took their name, in the quiet parish of Logie, or Logie-Murdoch, as it used to be called, in the county of Fife. His father held office in the household of James the Fourth, whose hunting excursions frequently led him from Falkland Palace to the King's Park, on Lucklaw Hill, in the immediate neighbourhood of the estate of Forret.

Young Forret, like many of the sons of the landed proprietors of the period, was destined for the Church, and, after acquiring the elements of a liberal education at home, he was sent to the Continent to prosecute his studies at Cologne. Although inquiry was at that time beginning to be freely made regarding the doctrines and pretensions of the Church of Rome, Forret seems to have been thoroughly protected from such influences in the close University and Protestant-banishing municipality of Cologne. He seems to have returned to his native land a fervent Papist, and soon afterwards we find him assuming the habit of an Augustinian Canon, and entering the Monastery of Inchcolme. How long he remained in ignorance of the truth we have no means of knowing; but when at length it crossed his path, it was in a remarkable way. It was not by the ashes of Patrick Hamilton that Thomas Forret was infected with the new heresy. A dispute had arisen between the Abbot and Canons regarding the portion due to them for their daily maintenance. The Book of the Foundation was appealed to, and the Canons succeeded in getting possession of it, with a view to the settlement of the

question in debate. The Abbot, it appears, had reasons of his own for wishing to recover this book, and wiled it from them by giving them, instead of it, a volume of the works of St. Augustine. They read this book with interest, and none of them with greater avidity than Thomas Forret; and from it he got other and better information than the Book of the Foundation could have given him. 'Oh! happy and blessed book,' he was wont to exclaim, when he came to know the truth, and reflected on the means by which he had found it. St. Augustine seems to have led him to the Bible, and the Bible to that long-buried doctrine, Justification by faith in Christ alone. And, under the guidance of this truth, Forret lived a useful and self-denying life, and at length died a martyr's death.

Having made the great discovery, his ambition was to communicate to others the blessing which he himself had received. Nor was his labour in vain. Some of the younger members of the Convent were converted to his views. As for the others, he was wont to say that 'the old bottles would not receive the new wine.' Richard Abercromby, the Abbot—for I believe he was head of the Convent at the time,—seems to have been an easy-minded man, tolerant of Forret's views, but apprehensive lest he should get into difficulties through his bold statements of the truth. Several of the churches belonging to the Monastery were served by the Canons. One of the brethren acted as Vicar of Aberdour, and Thomas Forret became Vicar of Dollar. In this situation, as might have been expected, he displayed the spirit, and abounded in the labours of a devoted pastor. Calderwood tells us that 'he taught his flock the ten commandments, and showed them the way of their salvation to be only by the blood of Jesus Christ. He penned a little catechism, which he caused a poor child to answer him when any faithful brother came to him, to allure the hearts of the hearers to embrace the truth, which, indeed, converted many in the country about.

He rose at six in the morning and studied till twelve, and after dinner till supper in summer. In winter he burned candle till bedtime. When he visited any sick person in the parish that was poor, he would carry bread and cheese in his gown-sleeve to the sick person, and give him silver out of his purse, and feed his soul with the bread of life. He was very diligent in reading the Epistle to the Romans in the Latin tongue, whereby he might be able to dispute against the adversaries. He would get three chapters by heart in one day, and at evening gave the book to his servant, Andrew Kirkie, to mark where he went wrong in the rehearsing; and then he held up his hands to the heavens, and thanked God that he was not idle that day.' To this I may add that his public spirit kept pace with his devotion to his pastoral work; and the bridge over the Devon, at Dollar, which still goes by the name of 'the Vicar's Bridge,' was planned by his wisdom, and built by means of his generosity.

These glimpses sufficiently reveal the close student, the diligent pastor, and the benevolent and tender-hearted man. And his faithfulness was in keeping with his diligence; for Calderwood further tells us: 'When the pardoners would come to his kirk to offer pardon for money, he would say—"Parishioners, I am bound to speak the truth to you; this is but to deceive you. There is no pardon for our sins that can come to us from Pope or any other, but only by the blood of Christ."' Nor was it merely among his parishioners that Thomas Forret laboured thus assiduously. His proximity to the Augustinian Monastery of Cambuskenneth brought him into close and friendly contact with the Canons there. We know that his influence with Robert Logie, the instructor of the novitiate in that Monastery, was great; and thus Forret's influence would tell indirectly on the young Canons at Cambuskenneth, as formerly it had done, in a more direct way, on his youthful brethren at Inchcolme. With Thomas Cocklaw, Priest

of Tullibody, he also maintained friendly intercourse, and when these companions of his were compelled to flee the country, heavy suspicion rested on the Vicar of Dollar.

Meanwhile, he continued to preach every Sabbath to his parishioners; and thus he incurred the anger of the Friars—Black and Grey—the preaching orders of the period. Finding, probably, that the Abbot of Inchcolme was little inclined to move in the direction they wished, the Friars accused him to the Bishop of Dunkeld, in whose diocese Dollar was situated. And the burden of their accusation against the vicar was that he was a heretic; and that he showed the mysteries of the Scriptures to the common people, in English, which they feared would make the clergy odious in their eyes. A summons was issued; and now we are to see the Vicar of Dollar confronted with the Bishop of Dunkeld. Foxe's account of the Vicar's examination, as contained in the *Book of Martyrs*, is quaint, but exceedingly graphic and interesting.

'The Bishop,' says he, 'moved by the Friars' instigation, called Dean Thomas and said to him, "My joy, Dean Thomas, I love you well; and therefore I must give you my counsel, how you should rule and guide yourself." To which Thomas said, "I thank your lordship heartily." Then the Bishop began his counsel in this manner: "My joy, Dean Thomas, I am informed that you preach the Epistle or Gospel, every Sunday, to your parishioners, and that you take not the cow nor the upmost cloth from your parishioners, which is very prejudicial to the churchmen."'

In case the allusion of the Bishop's should be misunderstood, it may be said in passing, that on the occasion of a death, the greedy churchmen of those days claimed a cow from the bereaved family, and either the uppermost covering of the bed, or the best suit of clothes belonging to the deceased.

'"And, therefore, my joy, Dean Thomas," continued the Bishop, "I would you took your cow and upmost cloth,

as other churchmen do; or else it is too much to preach every Sunday, for in so doing you may make the people think that we should preach likewise; but it is enough for you when you find any good Epistle, or any good Gospel, that setteth forth the liberty of the holy church, to preach that and let the rest alone." Thomas answered, "My lord, I think none of my parishioners will complain that I take not the cow nor the uppermost cloth, but will gladly give me the same, together with any other thing they have; and I will give and communicate with them anything I have. And so, my lord, we agree right well, and there is no discord among us. And when your lordship sayeth it is too much to preach every Sunday, indeed I think it is too little; and also would wish that your lordship would do the like." "Nay! nay! Dean Thomas," said my lord, "let that be, for we are not ordained to preach." Then said Thomas, "When your lordship biddeth me preach when I find any good Epistle, or a good Gospel, truly, my lord, I have read the New Testament and the Old; and all the Epistles and Gospels; and among them all I could never find one evil Epistle, or evil Gospel. But if your lordship will show me the good Epistle and the good Gospel; and the evil Epistle and the evil Gospel; then I shall preach the good and omit the evil."'

The Bishop evidently felt that this was putting him uncomfortably into a corner, for Foxe adds, 'Then spake my lord stoutlie, and said, "I thank God I never knew what the Old and the New Testament was; therefore, Dean Thomas, I will know nothing but my portuise and my pontifical!"' The *Breviary* and *Book of Ceremonies* were the authorities thus referred to, as the Bishop's 'Paternoster, Decalogue, and Creed.' 'Of these words,' continues Foxe, 'there arose a proverb, which was long common in Scotland, "Ye are like the Bishop of Dunkeld, that knew neither the new law nor the old law," "Go your way," said my lord to the Vicar; "Go your way, and let alone all these phan-

tasies ; for if you persevere in these erroneous opinions, ye will repent it when you may not mend it." Thomas said, "I trust my cause be just in the presence of God; and therefore I pans [consider] not much what does follow thereupon."'

To some it may seem almost incredible, that a Scottish Bishop, even before the time of the Reformation in Scotland, should have been so lamentably ignorant; but there is only too good evidence of the accuracy of Foxe's statements. Archbishop Spotswood's account is substantially the same. And yet, to his own disgrace and the shame of those who appointed him, George Crichton, the bishop in question, was one of the commissioners by whom Patrick Hamilton was condemned to death for heresy! It provokes a smile, if not something less genial, to find Bishop Keith saying of him, that 'he was a man nobly disposed, very hospitable, and a magnificent housekeeper, but in matters of religion not much skilled.'

Once and again, as Calderwood assures us, was Thomas Forret brought before the Bishop of Dunkeld; and, on at least one of these occasions, James Beaton, Bishop of St. Andrews, was assessor to his brother of Dunkeld; with the view, we presume, of propping up his rather weak theology. It seems to have been after one of the episcopal admonitions which followed up these interviews, that Richard, Abbot of St. Colme's Inch, becoming seriously alarmed about the Vicar's position, warned him that he should be less outspoken. 'Will you say as they say, and keep your mind to yourself, and save yourself?' asked the Abbot. 'I thank your lordship,' said the Vicar; 'you are a friend to my body, but not to my soul. Before I deny a word which I have spoken, you shall see this body of mine blow away first with the wind in ashes.' Noble words! and noble because so genuine, as the issue proved.

Thomas Forret had the power of attaching others strongly to him. The Abbot of Inchcolme was much his friend;

and even George Crichton, the Bishop of Dunkeld, in his dealings with the Vicar, betrayed more ignorance than cruelty. But it was now the fate of Thomas Forret to fall into the hands of one to whose heart pity was a stranger. We allude to Cardinal Beaton. In obedience to a citation Forret appeared before a commission composed of the Cardinal, the Lord Chancellor, and the Bishops of Glasgow and Dunblane. That honest historian, Lindsay of Pitscottie, has given an account of the Vicar's trial before this commission, which is about as graphic as Foxe's description of the interview with the Bishop of Dunkeld. But this we can do little more than notice. The chief accusations brought against Forret were his declining to take offerings and cross-presents from his people, special emphasis being laid on 'the cow and the upmost cloth;' his instructing his parishioners to say the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments in English, and his using the New Testament in English. One incident connected with the trial is very instructive. Forret had quoted the Apostle's words: 'Yet in the church I had rather speak five words, with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.' 'Where findest thou these words?' said the accuser. The Vicar answered, 'In my book, which is in my sleeve.' Then the accuser started to the Vicar, and pulled the book out of his sleeve, and held it up to the people, saying, 'Behold! he has the book of heresy in his sleeve which makes all the pley [disturbance] in the Kirk.' This was the truth at last. It was God's Book that had bred all this disturbance in a corrupt Church and a priest-ridden land,—as that Word must ever do when it is freely circulated. And so long as Bible truth is faithfully preached in the pulpits of Scotland, and read in her families, we shall have the surest antidote against error. Having been found guilty of what was laid to his charge, Thomas Forret was condemned to death; and as he had been, in

this fashion, a heresiarch and a teacher of heresy, no room was left for recantation. A less distinguished Christian might have had the option given him of burning his fagot; but this was not to be thought of in the case of the Vicar of Dollar. No doubt, too, it was held to be useless in his case, his firmness being on a par with his gentleness. Sometimes, in the very mode in which an eminently good man is persecuted, there is found a tacit admission of his excellence.

An affecting account of Thomas Forret's execution, written by his faithful servant, Andrew Kirkie, has been preserved. 'When he was brought to the place of execution'—which was on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh, and, I have reason to believe, on the authority of the accurate David Laing, near, if not on, the site of the Free Assembly Hall—'Friar Hardbuchill biddeth him follow him, "Say I believe in God," saith the Friar; "I believe in God," saith he; "and in our Ladie," saith the Friar; "I believe as our Lady believeth," said he; "Say," said the Friar, "I believe in God and in our Ladie." "Cease," said he; "tempt me not. I know what I should say as well as you, thanks be to God." So he left him, and tempted the rest in like manner.' Others, I might have said ere this, were about to suffer martyrdom along with this servant of God. Foxe tells us that three or four men belonging to Stirling suffered death at the same time for the unpardonable offence of being present at the marriage of the Vicar of Tullibody, and for eating flesh in Lent at the said bridal!

Kirkie's narrative further informs us that: 'In the meantime, while he'—Forret—'was saying to the people, "I never ministered the sacrament but I said, 'As the bread entereth into your mouth, so shall Christ dwell by lively faith in your hearts.'" "Away! away!" said one standing beside him with his jack [coat of mail] on, "we will have no preaching here." Another taketh the New Testament out of his bosom, holdeth it up before the

people, and crieth, "Heresy! heresy!" Then the people cried, "Burn him! burn him!" He crieth with a loud voice, first in Latin, and then in English, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" After [afterwards], first in Latin, then in English, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" After that, as his manner was to end with some Psalm in his prayers, he began at the 51st Psalm, in Latin, "*Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam*" [Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness], and so continued till they pulled the stool from under his feet, and so worried [strangled], and afterwards burnt him.'

Thus died Thomas Forret. And, while our neighbourhood has much connected with it that is intensely interesting, in a historical point of view, that interest undoubtedly culminates in the Monastery of Inchcolme and Thomas Forret, the most distinguished of its Canons; and even when that old weather-beaten tower which crowns the monastic pile has become a heap of ruins, the right-hearted pilgrim will row over to that strangely-interesting island, in order that he may stand on a spot that Thomas Forret has made famous.

Some time ago I examined and copied, at Donibristle, a charter belonging to the Earl of Moray. It is dated 27th April 1543, and has the signatures of the Abbot and the other members of the Convent—fifteen persons in all. Had the charter been dated five years earlier, the name of Thomas Forret might have been expected to appear among the number. But by this time his ashes had been 'carried away with the wind,' as he said they should be, ere he would deny a word he had uttered. 'That, however,' I said to myself, 'is the signature of the Abbot who bade him say as his enemies said, and keep his mind to himself, and save himself.' And as my eye glanced over the signatures of the Canons I could not help saying, 'These, doubtless, are the signatures of some of the companions of God's martyred servant, some of the younger of whom believed as he did;

and others of them, "the old bottles," of whom he said that they "would not receive the new wine."'

Glancing, ere we close, at another of the singular raids to which the Abbey was exposed, during the prevalence of hostilities between England and Scotland, it must have been in Richard Abercromby's time that the island and Abbey were seized by the English in 1547, immediately after the battle of Pinkie. An amusing account of it is given in a fragment preserved by Sir John Dalyell. As may be gathered from the tone of it, it was written by an Englishman. Patten, the writer, dwells on the importance of the island, as commanding the whole Firth, with the havens on it. The brethren of the Abbey—Abbots and Canons alike—had fled, betaking themselves, no doubt, to their 'continental' residence at Donibristle. But a new Abbot was forthcoming in the person of Sir John Luttrell, Knight; and a hundred and fifty soldiers, with seventy mariners, to keep the waters free of invaders, swelled the Convent to larger proportions than usual; thus investing the Abbot with great power. Abbot Luttrell being thus attended, we are told by the facetious writer, 'The perfytnes of his religion is not always to tarry at home, but sometime to rowe out abrode, a visitacion; and when he goithe I have hard say, he taketh his summers in barke with hym, which ar very open-mouthed, and neuer talk but they are harde a mile of, so that either for loove of his blessynges, or feare of his cursinges, he is lyke to be soouveraigne ouer most of his neighbours.' This is very amusing; but, after all, it turns out to be only what our American cousins call tall talk. For Bishop Lesley, speaking of the English at this time, says: 'Thair flotte [fleet] on the sey brint the toun of Kincorne [Kinghorn], and sum utheris of the sey coist, and tuik the Abbay of Sanct Colme's Inche, and fortifyit the same, leaving Sir John Lutterell, Knycht, with a garesone of men thairin, quha

bruikit [enjoyed] not that hold long, bot was compelled, not long eftir, to depairt thairfra.'

Richard Abercromby was, strictly speaking, the last of the Abbots. In 1554 we find James Stewart, of Beath, Commendator of the Monastery. About the year 1590 he was succeeded by his son, Henry; and at length, in 1611, the benefice was erected into a temporal lordship in favour of Henry, as Lord St. Colme. But of the changes which the Reformation brought about to the Monastery we must speak at another time, when looking at the question of its possessions, and the many interesting incidents connected with their acquisition and alienation.

LECTURE V.

Possessions of the Monastery—Gifts of King David the First—Kincarnathar—Donibrysell—Fear of the English rovers—Lauin the Lesser—Ecclesmaline—Innerkinglassin and Kilrie—Churches of Aberdour, Dalgety, Rosyth, Auchtertool, and Beath—Possessions near Kinghorn—Tofts in Cramond and Edinburgh—Pagan the goldsmith—Tofts in Haddington, etc.—Kincarnie and Otherstown—Various rentals—A thousand eels out of Strathenry—William de Mortimer's gift of land, in his territory of Aberdour—Caer-almond—Restalrig—Inverkeithing and Fordell—The Avenels and Mores of Abercorn, their gifts—Richard of Inverkeithing and Constantine of Lochore—The fights of Fithkil or Leslie—Baledmon and Lundy—Fights about the mill of Aberdour—Story of the King's physician—The 'Crossaikers'—Eglismartyn—Lochorward—The church of Dollar—Tenements in Haddington—Brego—Town of Wester Aberdour—Retour of the lordship of St. Colme—Feuing and alienation of the possessions of the Monastery—The Commendators—The suppressed Monastery becomes a receptacle for pirates, then a lazaretto—Reflections on the monastic system.

In giving some account of the possessions of the Monastery of Inchcolme, there are two plans, one or other of which may be followed. We may take our stand at the period of its dissolution, and enumerate the possessions belonging to it at that date. The materials for such a history will not be difficult to find. They will be found in the charter erecting the dissolved Abbey into a temporal lordship, and will be repeated in deeds of entail, or documents of a similar kind.

Another plan is, to take our stand at the period of the foundation of the Religious House, and, by means of its charters arranged in a chronological order, to watch the growing fortunes of the institution, marking the possessions

with which it begins its career; the circumstances in which others are acquired; the disputes that, from time to time, arise in regard to them; and, generally speaking, the outstanding manifestations of mind and feeling to which they give rise.

If you tell me of a man, sprung from a humble position in life, who has amassed a large fortune, and died very rich, I am not much interested in the fact, stated in this way. But if you tell me how he began life, and what the incidents connected with his career were, what plans and purposes he formed and cherished, and how he carried them into action, the story awakens interest in my mind. For now you lay open to me the workings of mind and heart, and, it may be, some of the noblest feelings which a man is capable of cherishing, as he toils on to eminence and usefulness; or, it may be, some of the basest feelings to which the human heart can be the prey.

Much in the same way do I regard the interest connected with the possessions of a monastery. If it were merely to know, as a matter of curiosity, what lands belonged to the old Abbey, and what did not,—however interesting, to those who reside in the neighbourhood of it, this might be, —I frankly confess I would not have wearied my eyes in tracing the history of its possessions. But when the question involved in it comes to be, how the men of our Scottish nation, some of whom lived in our immediate neighbourhood, felt and acted in regard to the all-important matter of religion, during the three or four centuries that preceded the Reformation, and how disputes regarding property were settled in those old days, I cannot think the time ill spent. And if we do not learn some useful lessons, as well as some facts hitherto little known, from what engages our attention, the fault will not be with the subject, but due to my mode of dealing with it.

In entering on our subject, let me say a word or two regarding the method which is to be pursued. The first document claiming our attention is a charter of Gregory,

Bishop of Dunkeld, making over to the Monastery the lands which King David the First had left to it. This is the earliest notice we have of the possessions of the House; and indeed it belongs to a period earlier than the actual institution of the Monastery. The next notable document is the Bull of Pope Alexander the Third, to which I referred in last lecture. After this, the notices of the possessions of the Monastery are scattered over the charters belonging to it. The original Chartulary seems now to be irrecoverably lost, but a reliable transcript of it is found among the Macfarlane MSS., in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, and of this I have made a copy, augmented by other charters at Donibristle, which by the kindness of the Hon. John Stuart, I have been allowed to examine and copy. By the kindness of the same friend, I have had papers put into my hands, which enable me to speak confidently as to the feuing and final alienation of the lands belonging to the Monastery, which I could not otherwise have done.

The first possessions of the House of which we have any notice are those which King David bestowed on it.

Whether his brother, King Alexander the First, had asked him to do something towards the endowment of the Monastery, the institution of which he had resolved on, but had not been able ere he died to carry fully into effect, we know not; but it is undoubted that David put certain lands under the charge of Gregory, Bishop of Dunkeld, to be kept by him till there should be canons on St. Colme's Inch. There is great confusion in the dates connected with the earliest Bishops of Dunkeld; but this we may safely say, that some time before the year 1169, Gregory made over to the Canons of Inchcolme the possessions with which he had been intrusted by the King. The first of these was the ISLAND itself, which must therefore have been a royal possession at a very early date. The next possession was KINCARNATHAR. This seems to be a corruption of the words Kincarnie-the-nether. In the Bull of Pope Alex-

ander the Third, the two Kincarnies are spoken of as Over and Nether Kincarnie. Kincarnie I believe to be the original form of which Cockairnie is a corruption, and the likelihood is that the possessions of the Monastery, in these lands, were limited to what went by the name of the 'Cross-aikers.' DONIBRYSELL is next mentioned; but although in some way connected with the Monastery at this early time, it is difficult to say what the exact nature of the tenure was, by which the Convent held it. For in 1178 the Pope confirms to them the right they then have in Donibristle; and yet, in 1408, Robert de Cardeny, Bishop of Dunkeld, gives the lands of Donibristle to the Abbot and Canons, in exchange for those of Cambo and Clarbertston, in the parish of Cramond. There can be no doubt that Donibristle was the residence of the Abbot and Canons, when from pressure of circumstances they found it impossible to remain in safety in their island home.

Bower tells us that, in the year 1421, the Abbot of Inchcolme, with the whole Convent, passed the summer and autumn on the mainland, for fear of the English rovers. But when the harvest was secured, and winter was approaching, when they had less to fear from their Southern foes, the brethren resolved on returning to Inchcolme. To the island accordingly they went, on Saturday, the 8th day of November, taking with them their servants and baggage. On the following day—Sunday, to wit—the Abbot sent the cellarer, with some of the servants, to bring from the mainland some provisions, and certain barrels of beer, which were lying in the brewery at Barnhill—near the site of the the present St. Colme House. About three o'clock in the afternoon the sailors put off from the shore; and, under the exhilarating influence of the beer, the quality of which they had tested before removing it, they deftly plied their oars, and skimmed the quiet waters with conscious ease. But, not content with the rate of progress they were making, the servants proposed to hoist the sail; and, in spite of the

remonstrances of the Canons, who seem to have foreboded evil, they carried their point. No sooner, however, was the canvas spread, than the boat was assailed by angry gusts of wind, and shaken by waves that had suddenly been raised. The sail was torn to rags by the strength of the blast, and, the steersman having let go the rudder, the boat filled and went down. 'What need is there of many words to tell the issue?' the chronicler pathetically asks. Of the six persons who were in the boat, three were drowned: Alexander Made the cellarer, and the two sailors. But Sir Peter, the Canon, and other two were miraculously snatched from the jaws of death. Sir Peter was supported for a whole hour and a half by a rope's end conveniently extended to him, and held, by St. Columba, whose aid he had implored; his saintship appearing in bodily form, as the Canon himself afterwards stoutly affirmed. The other two clung to a wisp of straw, till some men from Aberdour put off in a boat from Portevin, and came to their rescue. The fact, however, which the chronicler wishes chiefly to be noticed, in connection with this miracle, is that they who were thus saved from a watery grave had all of them, that day, been present at the celebration of the Mass; the chaplain having taken part in it, in the parish church of Dalgety.

The next place noticed in Bishop Gregory's charter is LAUIN, which in the Pope's Bull is spoken of as 'Lauyn the lesser, in Lothian;' and which I have also seen referred to as 'Little Lauying, near Earl's Lauying;' but, in spite of these notices, I have not been able to identify it in a satisactory way.

ECCLESMALINE is the next possession which the Bishop handed over; and of it I can speak more definitely. It is referred to, in the Pope's Bull, as the half-carucate of land—fifty-two acres—lying beside the church of St. Meline; and, in a retour of October 27, 1642, it is spoken of as then known by the name of Inchkerie. The church of St. Meline, or St. Maline, has had the misfortune to have its name twisted

into a variety of forms. Grant, in his *Life of Kirkcaldy of Grange*, tells us that near the mansion-house of that knight, there stood a little chapel, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. But the chapel to which he refers, the ruins of which some of my audience have seen, on the lands of Tyrie, was, I believe, none other than this church of St. Maline—the name having degenerated first into *Egilsmalye*, then into *Egsmalye*, and last of all into *Legsmalee*.

Then comes INNER-KINGLASSIN, which appears to have been some place in the parish of Kinglassie; and FELLORI is evidently the mistake of some scribe for KILRIE or KILLORI, which finds a place in the Pope's Bull.

Such were the earliest possessions of the Monastery, bestowed by David the First, and preserved by Bishop Gregory. King David seems to have had extensive possessions in our immediate neighbourhood; for Abbot Myln, in his *Lives of the Bishops of Dunkeld*, tells us that the King gave to Bishop Gregory the lands of Auchtertool, for the benefit of the church of Dunkeld; and it was, no doubt, in this way that the palace of Auchtertool, afterwards known as Hallyards, came to be the baronial residence of the bishops of that diocese.

In the Bull of Pope Alexander the Third, the first possessions referred to are the churches belonging to the Monastery. The churches of ABERDOUR and DALGETY seem to have been the very earliest possessions of this kind which the Canons could claim; and they came into their hands as gifts from the Bishops of Dunkeld. For the church of ROSYTH (ROSSIVE, as it was called of old), with the land belonging to it, the church of AUCHERTOOL and the chapel of BEATH, they appear to have been indebted to the same kind benefactors. And I strongly incline to the belief, that the last-named churches were made over to the Monastery by Richard de Praebenda; who also confirmed GLASSMOUNT to the Canons, and was buried in the church of St. Colme's Inch, in 1173.

Among the other possessions, confirmed by the Pope, were KYNNACHAN, in the neighbourhood of Kinghorn; and BUTHADLACH, near Lochore, in what is now the parish of Ballingry. There were also two tofts in CARIMONTH-NEARER-THE-SEA (Nether Cramond), belonging to the Monastery. But no information has come down to us regarding the donors of these lands.

At this early period—for we are still dealing with the twelfth century—the Monastery owned a toft in EDINBURGH, the donor of which was Pagan the goldsmith. King William the Lion had bestowed on him a piece of land, on the north side of the Church of St. Giles; and that piece of land Pagan makes over to God and the church of St. Colme's Inch, for the benefit of his own soul, and those of his predecessors and successors. But although the land is made over to the Convent as freely as it is possible for land to be bestowed on any Religious House, it is stipulated that a pound of cummin must yearly be paid, by the Canons, to the King's Chamberlains, as an acknowledgment that the toft is held with the sovereign's consent. This pound of cummin was one form of the blench duties of the time; and, at the close of the sixteenth century, it was valued at thirteen shillings and fourpence. I do not know whether, at this early time, the goldsmiths of Edinburgh were incorporated into a craft, and wore a particular costume. But at a later time they held their heads high, as being something better than ordinary tradesmen; and went about in scarlet cloaks, cocked hats, and gold-mounted canes. George Heriot, the founder of the Hospital that goes by his name, and he himself known by the name of 'Jingling Geordie,' was at a later time a member of the Incorporation of Goldsmiths. When we happen to pass along the High Street of Edinburgh, and come under the shadow of St. Giles's Church, we shall henceforth, I daresay, think of Pagan the goldsmith.

The next possessions referred to in the Pope's Bull are

two tofts in HADDINGTON, and two ox-gates, or twenty-six acres, of land in MIDDLETON, regarding which a Retour of Charles, Earl of Moray, makes the considerable mistake of converting the two into thirty-two!

The bestowers of these possessions are now forgotten, as also the donors of four marks yearly out of the mill of CRAMOND, and three shillings yearly out of CRAGIN—a place which I suppose to be the same with Craigie, in the parish of Dalmeny. And thus it is that many of those who, in the olden time, made over their property to monks and canons are at length utterly forgotten; and they who were expected to pray for them, as benefactors, do not, in the lapse of time, know for whom they are to perform this office. Does not even this circumstance show us that the sinner's Advocate and Intercessor should be One to whom all things are known, and who is not dependent for his knowledge on the accidents of time and place?

The next monasterial possession is one in which we are more interested, owing to its local associations. It is an annual-rent of thirteen shillings out of KINCARNYNE or KINCARNIE. This is one of the oldest grants made to the Monastery, and evidently refers to Cockairnie, in our immediate neighbourhood. In one of the old papers connected with the Abbey it is called Kincardine-Walden, an evident mistake for Kincarnyne-Waldevi, or Waldeve's-Kincarnie. Waldeve, Earl of Dunbar, had at this time very extensive possessions in our neighbourhood on both sides of the Forth, among which were the baronies of Barnbougle, Dalmeny, and Inverkeithing. Kincarnie, or Cockairnie, was part of the barony of Inverkeithing; and Waldeve, the son of Cospatrick, made over to the Monastery a mark yearly, out of that part of Kincarnie which OTHER possessed, and which, from that circumstance, came to be called Otherstown—a name which has been corrupted into Otterston. Waldeve had a daughter named Galiena, who was married to Sir Philip de Moubray, and, after the

lapse of seven hundred years, Kincarnie and Otherstown are still in the possession of his descendants.

A rental of ten shillings yearly, out of the lordship of the King at Kinghorn, is the next possession noted. It must have been the grant of one of the early kings, either Malcolm the Fourth or William the Lion. It seems to point to a royal residence there considerably before the time of Alexander the Third, whose sad death is recalled as often as the name of the place is mentioned. Lord Hailes tells us, in his *Annals*, that when Alexander the Second married Joan, Princess of England, in 1221, she was secured in a jointure of a thousand pounds, in land-rent; and that Kinghorn was one of the jointure-lands.

There are, among the charters of the Monastery, two confirmations of a toft in TIBBERMORE, which was the gift of Swain, the son of Thore. One of these confirmations is by Alan, the grandson of Swain; and the other by William de Ruthven, in the year 1362. There are some statements in these charters of a kind that would greatly interest those who are connected with the district to which they refer; giving, as they do, much information regarding the early condition of the country around Tibbermore; but I fear they would not be so interesting to those who do not know the locality.

The last possession referred to by the Pope is the very strange one of the yearly income of a thousand eels out of Strathenry, or Strathendry, as it is now called, in the parish of Leslie. Later statements bearing on the matter are more detailed, and tell us that, along with the thousand eels, the Convent had a right to two swine and a cow, yearly, out of the lands of Strathenry. This curious annual-rent was the gift of Robert de Quincy, whose name I find as a witness in many charters of the time of William the Lion. He is said to have obtained the lordship of Leuchars by his marriage with the daughter of the Celtic chief, Ness; and he was succeeded by his son, Seyer de Quincy, Earl of Win-

chester. He must also have had possessions in Strathenry, as his gift to the brethren of Inchcolme proves. Even the Augustinian Canons were not entirely above considerations connected with the supply of their table; and the eels from Strathenry would form an agreeable variety to their ordinary fare. Whether eel-pie had yet been invented, I cannot take it upon me to say, not having extended my investigations very far in that line. But from some notices of 'barrels of salted eels,' which have come across my path, I think it likely that it was in the form of soup that these snake-like creatures regaled the taste of the Canons.

In the ballad of 'Lord Randal,' you will remember that it was in a dish of eel-soup that the poison was administered which caused the young man's death. And as these sheets are being prepared for the press, it is being keenly debated in some quarters, whether conger-eels do not form the basis of the much-renowned turtle-soup.

I cannot tell whether it was that eels became scarce in the Leven and its tributaries, in the lands of Strathenry, owing to this yearly tribute, or that the proprietor's servants wearied of catching them, seeing there was to be no end of the task,—every year requiring to see its thousand caught, salted, and sent to the Monastery. But sure it is that innumerable quarrels arose regarding this yearly tribute, until it was at length agreed that the payment should be commuted, and that, instead of a thousand eels, two swine, and a cow, the proprietor of Strathenry should give the Convent a yearly sum of thirty-eight shillings sterling, within fifteen days after the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, a term which we now call Michaelmas. This payment was stipulated to be made at the parish church of Fithkil, for so the parish of Leslie was of old called. But arrangements of this kind were not always kept inviolate, even in what some people delight to call the 'good old times.' For on the 6th day of October, 1354—forty years after the battle of Bannockburn—Walter of Strathenry is summoned to

appear at the church of Fithkil for dereliction of duty. Seven years have passed since the commutation of the tribute was solemnly arranged: and the Feast of St. Michael has not failed to come round, and the fifteen days of grace have passed, but Walter and his yearly payment have not entered an appearance. Such is the charge brought against him; and Walter does not attempt to deny it. He thus owes the Abbot and Canons the sum of thirteen pounds six shillings sterling—a large sum for the time. And what is now to be done? It is amicably and, on the part of the Convent, generously arranged, that if Walter pays his rent regularly in time to come, adding two shillings a year to the annual sum, for the good of his own soul, and the souls of his predecessors—thus bringing the amount up to forty shillings, and making it even money—nothing will be said about the balance. But if he fails to do this, he must pay up all arrears; and he declares himself willing, in the case of failure, to submit to the decision of the Bishop of Dunkeld in the matter, even although he should order the lands of Strathenry to be sold, in order to realise the sum due to the Convent! Such is an example of bargain-making with ecclesiastics five centuries ago: and it gives us a better idea of their power, and the shifts to which they were put in the way of collecting their revenues, than much learned discussion would.

These were the possessions that belonged to the Monastery as early as the year 1178, as enumerated in the charter of Gregory, Bishop of Dunkeld, and the Bull of Pope Alexander the Third, and as later charters throw light on incidents connected with their tenure. In no other charters prior to the dissolution of the Abbey are its possessions found grouped together. We are therefore obliged to examine each charter by itself in order to discover the donors of later possessions, the date of the grants, and the circumstances connected with the holding of them.

I am sorry to cast any discredit on the historical accu-

racy of Sir Robert Sibbald; but not only can I find no authority, in any paper connected with the Monastery which has come under my notice, to warrant his statement that Sir Alan de Mortimer gave the half of his lands of Aberdour for the right of burial, to himself and his family, in the church of the Monastery; but I have found some notices which seem to throw discredit on the statement. The name of Sir Alan does not once occur in any of the charters in Macfarlane's copy of the Register, nor in the Donibristle transumpt. And in a Bull of Pope Lucius (1181-1185), he confirms to the Prior and Canons the half-ploughgate of land—fifty-two acres—in the territory of Aberdour, and the half of the rental of the mill of Aberdour; and both are said to be the gifts of William de Mortimer. This was he who gave the Convent such trouble by the intrusion of Robert, the King's Clerk, into the church at Aberdour; and I strongly suspect that this was the price he had to pay ere the Prior and Canons made peace with him. Moreover, it is more than probable that the story which Sibbald tells of Sir Alan's coffin being dropped into the sea between the mainland and Inchcolme—long known as 'Mortimer's Deep'—in reality applies to Sir William de Mortimer; for, in his case, the Canons' remembrance of the shameful way in which they had been treated in the churchyard of Aberdour might account for the dead knight being treated with so little ceremony.

In the Bull to which I have just referred, Pope Lucius confirms to the Monastery the island which is before the port of Caramund. This evidently refers to the Isle of Cramond (Caer-Almond). But this island seems to have been called Leverith in those early days. The Convent set it in feu to the Bishop of Dunkeld, for it lay near the possessions of that diocese at Cramond, which included a palace for the Bishops. But by and by (will it be believed of a Bishop and his Chapter?) they ceased to pay their

feu-duty, and yet kept hold of the island! The Canons of Inchcolme and the Bishops of Dunkeld generally lived in great amity, but on this occasion they fairly quarrelled; and it must be held that Walter, the Prior, and his brethren had decidedly the best of the case in point of argument, as far as can now be known. So hot did the contest become that the Pope, Innocent the Third, was appealed to; and he ordered the Abbot of Lindores, the Archdeacon of St. Andrews, and the Prior of the Isle of May, to inquire into the dispute, and settle it on just principles. How these dignitaries carried out the Pope's instructions we cannot tell; but as we never afterwards find any notices, in the charters of the Monastery, of the island of Leverith or its feu-duty, we must conclude that the Convent either lost the day, or compromised the matter.

Some time during his reign King Malcolm the Fourth made a gift to the Monastery of a toft in the town of INVERKEITHING; and there is a confirmation of it by Robert de Londoniis, a natural son of King William the Lion. This was some time before 1198; and, from the way in which Inverkeithing is spoken of, it is evident that it was, even at that early time, a royal burgh. The gift does not appear to have had much of a royal character about it, for we never afterwards find any notice of it.

About the year 1214 Thomas de Lastalrig—now known as Restalrig—made over to the Monastery, for the good of his own soul, and that of Anna, his wife, and the souls of his predecessors and successors, the whole of that land which Baldwyn Comyn had held from him in the town of Leith, along with twenty-four and a half acres of arable land in his territory of Lastalrick, on the south of the highway between Edinburgh and Leith. The last-named portion of land is that which now goes by the name of Coatfield.

About the same time Richard, the son of Hugh de Camera—a name that afterwards assumed the forms of Chambers and Chalmers—proprietor of Fordell, in our

immediate neighbourhood, bestowed on the Monastery, for the benefit of his own soul, that of his wife, and the souls of his progenitors and successors, thirteen acres of land in his territory of Fordell, lying near the sea, between the lands of Dalgety and those of Lowchald—now called Leuchat—evidently pointing to Little Fordell. Richard also gave the Convent a toft and croft in his town of Fordell; and these portions of land came afterwards to be called St. Thereota's, or by corruption St. Cereot's, lands.

In all cases when lands were made over to a Religious House, two charters were written as evidents of the transaction, one of which was held by the donor, and the other by the receiver of the gift. When making some investigations in the charter-room at Fordell, in connection with Mr. David Laing's edition of Robert Henryson's poems, I found the donor's copy of the charter making over these gifts to the Monastery—a charter in beautiful preservation, although it has lain in the archives of the possessors of the estate of Fordell for upwards of six hundred years. I may also take you into my confidence, and tell you that in that charter-room are also to be found many documents connected with the town of Inverkeithing; the Hendersons having for many years been the hereditary Provosts of the burgh. In the same repository there are also many papers connected with the celebrated David Dickson of Irvine, which, no doubt, came into the possession of the Hendersons through their connection with the family at Newbigging, in our neighbourhood. Before passing from statements regarding Fordell, I may mention that the chapel there has frequently come across me in these researches. In 1511 the right of presentation to it belonged to Mr. James Henryson; and, so late as 1567, Sir William Blackburn, the chaplain, set the church lands belonging to it in feu to Sir John Blyth, chaplain, for payment of a yearly duty of forty-three shillings and fourpence, Scots. The present chapel is not very old, having been built about the year 1633.

To return to the Monastery: a little after the time when this grant of which we have been speaking was made by Richard de Camera, that is to say, between 1220 and 1236, Gilbert, Bishop of Dunkeld, made over to the Canons twenty-six acres of land, lying to the south of the church of Auchtertool. This was, no doubt, part of the lands of 'Ouchtertule,' which King David had bestowed on Bishop Gregory, and of which we have previously spoken.

In 1233, the multures of Couston were commuted to a yearly payment of eight shillings. The curious story of this settlement I told you in my last lecture.

Sometime between the years 1236 and 1249, John, the son of Gervasius Avenel, made over to the Monastery twenty-six acres of land, in his territory of Duddingston, within the barony of Abercorn. This grant was confirmed by Sir William More of Abercorn, about the year 1370. I have had the original of this charter of confirmation in my hands, through the courtesy of the Hon. John Stuart. It is in wonderful preservation, considering that it is nearly five hundred years old. As there is a great charm about this old document, due both to the light it throws on the disasters that had befallen the Monastery, about the time when it was granted, and the hearty way in which the knight bestows the confirmation required, I shall give you a translation of it in simple language:

'To all the faithful in Christ, who shall see these presents or hear of them, William More, Knight, Lord of Abercorn, wishes everlasting Salvation in the Lord. Since we have heard by the accounts of these religious men, the Abbot and Canons of St. Colme's Inch, and other trustworthy fellow-countrymen, that the charters and other evidents of the Monastery have been carried away and destroyed by wars and other misfortunes, which, by concealing the just rights of the Canons, has frequently been the means of hindering them. Therefore let all men know that we, having a regard to the Divine charity, have renewed, and

by this charter have confirmed, to God and the church of St. Colme's Inch, and the Canons serving God there, and to serve him in all time coming, that donation and concession which John, the son of Gervasius Avenel, gave them, in pure and perpetual alms-gift, and confirmed with his charter: namely, two oxgates of land in the territory of Dodyngton, in the barony of Abercorn, with the common pasture of the said town, such as properly pertains to it, as if it were to a person residing in the said town, with free use of the mill for every kind of grain, and to be the first to grind after the laird. To be had and holden by the said Canons, in pure and perpetual alms-gift, with all its just pertinents in wood and plain, in roads and foot-paths, in ponds and mills, in meadows and pastures, in moors and marshes and peat-mosses, and all other advantages, as well below as above ground, with free issue and entry to animals, and all other things necessary for cultivation, as freely, quietly, and honourably, and as unembarrassed by any custom, secular exaction, or demand, as it is possible for any land in the domain of any baron or laird, in the kingdom of Scotland, to be held or possessed. Moreover we, the said William and our heirs, shall make good the injuries caused by all accidents that may befall the said land. And that this renewal and confirmation may remain firm and unshaken, we have authenticated it with our seal; and in order that the matter may be still more secure, we have procured that the seals of the reverend father in Christ, Michael, by the grace of God Bishop of Dunkeld, and John, by the grace of God Abbot of Holyrood, at Edinburgh, be affixed to it, in presence of these witnesses:—Reginald More and John More, our sons, Richard Brown, David de Meldrum, and many others.' The three tags are still attached to the charter. Notwithstanding all this trouble, in the way of renewal and confirmation, the original charter of John Avenel had not been destroyed. It had only fallen aside, or, if taken away, it had been restored; for I have seen

in the charter-room at Donibristle, both it and that of Warinus, from whose hands the land in question passed into John Avenel's possession.

About the same time, when John Avenel bestowed the gift of which we have just been speaking, Galfrid, the Bishop of Dunkeld, gave the Monastery a yearly sum of twenty shillings, out of the church of CRAMOND, and this sum was to be spent in procuring incense, to be burnt at the elevation of the Host, in the church of the Monastery. Between the years 1250 and 1272, another Bishop of Dunkeld, Richard of Inverkeithing, gave other twenty shillings yearly, out of the same church of Cramond, for the purpose of keeping wax-lights burning before the great altar of the church of the Monastery, on the Vigil and Day of St. Columba. And so, if any of the good people of Aberdour had, after the date of this gift, crossed over to Inchcolme, on the first of your Fair-days, they would have seen a great profusion of wax-lights burning before the great altar, in honour of their great patron saint. This Richard of Inverkeithing was he who built the choir of the monasterial church at his own expense, and his heart lies buried at the north wall of the choir, as I told you in a former lecture.

In 1244, the Convent feued from Constantine de Lochore, who afterwards became Sheriff of Fife, the little hill called Clon, and sometimes Clon-vane, near their own land of Bothedillach or Buthadlach, as it is sometimes called, in the parish of Ballingry. In connection with this transaction, Constantine acknowledges himself to have received from the Abbot and Canons fifteen years' feu-duty all at once. And he makes no secret of the cause of this advance: it is *ad ardua negotia mea*—in colloquial phrase, because he was 'hard up.' Is there anything new under the sun, even in old charters, either as regards mundane experiences or the language that describes them? Constantine got half a mark of feu-duty yearly, for his little hill, Clon-vane, or Clunevane, as some of the old scribes write it.

I have already alluded to the Church of Fithkil, now called Leslie, but have not yet spoken of it as, at this early period, belonging to the Monastery of Inchcolme. Of all the churches in the world I have ever heard or read of, that about which, from beginning to end, there seems to have been most fighting, is this church of Fithkil. I can fancy the quarriers fighting with each other, as they excavated the stones of which it was to be built; the builders quarrelling, as they laid one course of its masonry over another; the joiners speaking angry words to one another as they roofed it in; the slaters snarling at each other as they covered it with slabs of cold grey stone; the hinges creaking in displeasure at the doors; the key grumbling at the lock; and, in short, every single thing about it in a state of chronic feud with every other. A well-known author lately presented the reading community with a volume dealing with the Great Battles of the World. He should certainly have added another, which he might have called *The Never-ending Battle of the Church of Fithkil.* At some future time I may write for you a history of the wars that have raged around it; but at present I must content myself with a few statements regarding the most outstanding incidents of the long campaign.

The history of the Church, as far as we have been able to trace it through the dimness of time and the dust of conflict, begins in a characteristic way, with a fight between Merleswain of Ardross, the son of Waldeve, on the one hand, and Galfrid, Bishop of Dunkeld—the Ornament, Shield, and Sword of the Clergy of that Church, as his epitaph declared—on the other. It was in his character of 'Sword' that Galfrid was best known to Merleswain and Fithkil—fighting the question of the patronage of the church. The battle rages loud and long for a time, and it is contested so toughly on both sides, that Otho, the Pope's Legate, who happens to be in the country at the time, is called in to put an end to it. Otho, finding the task

beyond the reach of his own individual prowess, commits it to the judgment of four neutral persons. These arbiters decree that Merleswain and his heirs shall have the right of presentation to the Church for ever; but that, after the decease or resignation of Mr. John de Everley, the Rector, Merleswain shall concede the Church to Dunkeld, to be a prebendal church of that See. The right, however, is distinctly reserved to Merleswain and his heirs to present a fit person, in canonical orders, as prebendary—this person paying a sum of ten marks yearly to the church of Dunkeld.

After this, it would appear that Scolastica, the daughter of Merleswain, along with Richard, her husband, made over their right of presentation to the Abbot and Canons of Inchcolme. At this point Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan, and Thomas de Melgdrum take up the cudgels, and dispute the right which the brethren of Inchcolme claim. John de Ouler, who had succeeded John de Everley as Rector, has in his turn died; and the question has, of course, again to be considered who has the right of presentation to the vacant charge. The case is debated before Richard of Inverkeithing, a great friend of the Monastery of Inchcolme; and this, perhaps, has some slight bearing on the issue. Several days—think of it!—are spent in discussing the matter; and after a vast amount of altercation, worthy of the palmiest and most militant days of the church of Fithkil, the Earl, while stoutly maintaining that the right of presentation belongs to him, comes to terms. He declares that having the fear of God before his eyes, and taking into account the poverty of the Canons of St. Colme's Inch—being, moreover, desirous of having some interest in the prayers of those holy men—he surrenders his just right to them. This point being reached, there is a busy time of it with the clerks; for the Earl appends his seal to a charter, in which he binds himself to abide by the decision come to; the Bishop of Dunkeld confirms to the Monastery the right of presentation; and Scolastica declares,

with her hands on the open Gospels, that she will never call in question the right of the Abbot and Canons.

Is any one simple enough to believe that peace was long to remain unbroken at Fithkil, even after all this array of charters written, signed, and sealed? Then I must undeceive him. The battle-field, ere long, merely shifts from the Church to the Chapel; and Richard de Kirkcaldy disputes the claims of the Canons to it—the Chapel of the Blessed Mary. And it is only when the Fithkil Rector meets the 'Fechtin' Bishop,' William St. Clair, at the chapel of the Grange, at Bowprie—as we saw in a previous lecture—that this outburst of controversy is brought to a peaceful end.

And now I think I hear you saying, 'There, at last, is an end of these wars and fightings!' But it is not so. Fithkil, by and by, changed its name to Leslie, but it remained true to its old nature. The tide of battle then ebbed away from the Chapel and flowed in the direction of the Kirklands: and there was skirmishing and fighting between the Abbots and the Earls of Rothes, nearly all the way down to the period of the Reformation. And if that happy event had not occurred, I have not the least doubt that the battle would have been raging yet—having perhaps shifted back from the Kirklands to the Kirk again. But, through all the tumult and smoke of these conflicts, we must find our way back to other possessions of the Monastery.

In 1250 Marjory de Lascelis, in her widowhood, made over to the Convent twenty shillings of silver, yearly, out of the lands of BALEDMON—a place, I believe, in the parish of Forgan, which, at a later period, belonged to the family of Young of Kirkton, and was afterwards called Friartown. The motive leading to the grant is that which we find constantly recurring in the charters—the safety of her own soul, and the souls of her relatives. About the same time, too, Walter, lord of Lundy, makes over to the Canons fifteen shillings yearly out of his mill of LUNDY, or Lundin, near Largo. And in connection with this gift, we notice

something out of the usual run; for the motive is said to be brotherly feeling to the brethren of the Monastery; and not a word is said about their masses, said or sung. Whether Walter was ahead of his time in his knowledge of Bible doctrine, we shall not take it on us to affirm; but his charter is the only one, in early times, that we can recall, in which this peculiar phraseology occurs.

Somewhere about the year 1272, Hugo Cnox makes over to the Monastery two shillings yearly, which had become his by hereditary right, out of land in the burgh of HADDINGTON, which Thurkin possessed. This annual rental he bestows for the benefit of the soul of his good lord, Richard, Bishop of Dunkeld—that is, Richard of Inverkeithing. Can this have been an ancestor of the celebrated John Knox? His name was sometimes spelt as Hugo's is in this charter, and he too belonged to Haddington, or its immediate neighbourhood.

In 1252 occurred one of those curious settlements regarding the mill of ABERDOUR, of which I have already related more than one. The dispute on this occasion was between the Abbot and Convent, on the one side; the parties on the other being Nesso of Balmacmoll (Balmule), and Sibilla, his wife; and Simon of Foreth, and Christiana, his wife. The question is one affecting the multures of Balmacmoll and Montequi. The case is referred to arbiters for adjudication; and these are no less personages than Peter, Bishop of Aberdeen; John, Abbot of Dunfermline; J., Prior of that place; Robert of Rossive; and Roger of Derby. After a debate before these worthies, the matter is settled thus:—Nesso and Simon are to pay ten shillings yearly to the Monastery, and are to be free of any charge for the repair of the mill or the mill-pond. They are, moreover, to be at liberty to grind their corn where they please; but are not to be allowed to erect a mill of their own on the lands of Balmacmoll or Montequi. And when they do not grind at Aberdour, they must satisfy

the miller there as they best can. A world of parchment and wax was, in this case too, spent in making the arrangement as secure as Bishops and Abbots could make it.

What family was this, represented by Nesso of Balmacmoll and Simon of Foreth, who lived in our neighbourhood, and had possessions in it, six hundred years ago? Some of my hearers no doubt read in the newspapers some time ago of the death of Sir James Ramsay of Bamff, in the parish of Alyth, who left a large sum of money to the Scottish Episcopal Church, and whose family can boast of names connected in an honourable way with Scottish University education. He, I believe, was a lineal descendant of Nesso of Balmacmoll, or, according to Sir Robert Douglas's *Baronage*, of Nesso's brother Malcolm—a name which, at that early time, still told of ancestors who had been devoted to the memory of St. Columba. The family name was Ramsay, or de Ramsay. The first of the family of whom we know anything definitely, was Nesso, physician to King Alexander the Second; and Nesso of Balmacmoll, Simon of Foreth, and Peter de Ramsay, who became Bishop of Aberdeen, were, according to Bishop Keith, the sons of the King's physician. Douglas also assures us that Alexander Ramsay, a descendant of the family, was physician to James the Sixth and Charles the First. There is a wonderful story told of the physician of King Alexander, which some of us may have heard in early days, and others have read in Robert Chambers's *Popular Rhymes of Scotland*. But none of us, I am sure, have ever thought of connecting the hero of it with the father of a former proprietor of Balmule.

As there has not been much said to-night of a kind fitted to interest the younger portion of my audience, I may, chiefly for their sake, tell this story in brief form; and perhaps it may not be entirely unacceptable to the graver portion of my hearers, whose patience has been somewhat severely tried by dry names and dates. The wonderful

personage who is the hero of the story is called Sir James Ramsay in the popular tradition; but names are apt to be confused in such narrations.

Sir James, it appears, had joined in some political conspiracy, on account of which his lands were forfaulted, and he himself obliged to flee the country, a price having been set on his head. He made his escape to a foreign land; some say France, and others Spain. There he fell into such straits that he was like to perish of hunger. When in this condition, he met a grave-looking man, who, seeing him look so ill, inquired what the cause might be; and to him Sir James confided his story, confessing that he was famishing. This old gentleman proved to be a physician, and, taking pity on Sir James, he took him to his house, ministered to his pressing wants, and, finding him to be a man of education, engaged him as his apprentice. One day he told Sir James that there was a great secret in his possession, which might possibly make the fortune of both. He knew how to prepare a medicine which could cure every disease in the known world; but the material out of which it had to be manufactured was hard to get. A mysterious white serpent had first to be procured; but this reptile was confined to a stream in a particular district of Scotland; and this stream the old physician described so graphically and minutely, that Sir James at once perceived that it was one which ran through his own property, in the parish of Alyth. He therefore willingly offered to go in search of the serpent, and, after getting minute instructions from his master how to act, he disguised himself, and returned to his native land. For three nights he watched beside a deep pool of the stream which he knew so well; for only at night, and near the time of full moon, might he hope for success in his enterprise. Both on the first and the second night he saw the serpent leave the pool and glide under a large stone. On both occasions he tried to capture it, but failed. On the third night, however, he was

successful. The coveted white serpent was caught and killed; and Sir James hastened back to his master with the prize. The old physician was in ecstasies, and informed Sir James how the medicine was to be made. He was to take the dead reptile down to an underground vault, and there melt it down in a vessel over the fire. But the business was to be gone about very gingerly; for, if any stranger saw him while thus employed, or if, during the process, he tasted food, the charm would be gone. And should a drop of the unguent by any chance enter his lips he would be a dead man. Sir James did as he was bid; but it so happened that while pouring out the medicine, when very hot, a drop fell on his finger, and when he instinctively put it into his mouth to ease the smarting pain a wonderful thing occurred. The most opaque objects around him became to his vision perfectly transparent—his own body sharing in the change; and when his master entered the vault at this critical juncture his body too was, to Sir James's eyes, as transparent as crystal. In short, he saw through his master in two senses, and concluded that this effect of the medicine was what the old physician desired so eagerly to experience. With Scottish caution Sir James kept the secret to himself, and speedily took French leave of the old doctor, any continuance of his instruction being now no longer necessary.

In possession of this wonderful property of *clairvoyance*, he by and by returned to Scotland, where he found the King suffering from a dangerous malady, which baffled the skill of all his physicians. A proclamation had been issued, offering a great reward in money,—with, of course, the usual accompaniment in these old stories, of one of the royal princesses to wife,—to any one who should restore the King to health again. Sir James, still of course disguised, offered his services, and he needed only to look through the King, to see that there was a ball of hair—where no ball of hair ought to be—attached to the royal patient's heart. Having

got permission to take this away, he put the King into a deep sleep—tradition does not say whether or not it was by some early preparation akin to chloroform, the knowledge of which may have been afterwards lost—and, removing the ball of hair without so much as awakening the King, saved his life. And after the short period necessarily required for getting over the weakness caused by the loss of blood, the royal patient was restored to perfect health. Tradition is fortunate in not committing itself to the marriage of Sir James with one of the King's daughters, seeing that Alexander the Second never had any to bestow. But there is a curious confirmation of reward in another form coming to him, besides obtaining the King's pardon for his political offences. The writer of the New Statistical Account of the parish of Alyth tells us that 'Nessus de Ramsay, the founder of the family of Bamff, was a person of considerable note in the thirteenth century. He held the office of physician to King Alexander II., and received a grant of lands in this parish, which his descendants still hold, in reward for having saved the life of the King by a critical operation,—according to popular tradition, by cutting a hair-ball from the King's heart.' Nothing can be surer than this, that King Alexander the Second, in the eighteenth year of his reign, made over to Nesso, his physician, the lands of Bamff, along with others, in the parish of Alyth. From this fact, along with the popular tradition, we may safely conclude that Nesso had, in some marked way, been professionally of service to the King. And if Bishop Keith's account of the family is correct, which we have no reason to doubt, Nesso of Balmule was a son of the physician of Alexander the Second.

I have already incidentally told you how the land of Leyis was quit-claimed by Simon of Balram to the Monastery, and how the multure of Cullelo was commuted to an annual payment of fourteen shillings in the time of Thomas de Philiberto.

In the thirtieth year of his reign, 1280, Alexander the Third confirmed to the Monastery the grant of William Dod, burgess of Inverkeithing, and Matilda, his wife, of the mills of Fordell, and the land pertaining to them.

In 1349 an interesting settlement took place in the church of Dalgety regarding the 'Cross-aikers,' of which I have formerly spoken. William de Lamberton seems to have been at that time proprietor of the lands of Otterston; and the Abbot and Canons of Inchcolme charged him—before Duncan, Bishop of Dunkeld—with having appropriated to his own use the 'Cross-aikers' belonging to them. These lands seem to have got their name from crosses erected on them in memory of incidents now entirely forgotten. On good evidence, which I do not stay to describe particularly, I believe the one of these acres is near Parkend, and the other in the farm of the Pleasance.

About the middle of the fourteenth century the Monastery feued, from Bishop Duncan and the Chapter of Dunkeld, the lands of Eglismartyn, near Bowprie. Inchmartin is the name by which this land is now known; and the earlier form seems to point to the existence of a church or chapel there, in the distant part. The Monastery paid four marks of yearly feu-duty to the Bishop of Dunkeld for this land, the superiority of which, as appears from Myln's *Lives of the Bishops of Dunkeld*, passed, by and by, into the hands of the Monastery of Dunfermline.

In 1419 a Bull was procured by the Abbot and Canons from Pope Martin the Fifth, ordering measures to be taken against William Hay, of Lochorward, in the parish of Crichton, for withholding from them the lands of Caldside, and an annual-rent out of the mill of Lochorward; against Adam, Vicar of Cramond, for withholding an annual rent of forty shillings out of the mill of Cramond; against the tenants of Kilrie for the teinds lying unpaid for twenty years; against George Logan of Lestalrig for withholding the lands of Coatfield; and against the millers of Lundy

for an annual-rent of fifteen shillings, lying unpaid for thirty years. From all this it is evident that it was not always an easy matter in those times to hold the donors, or possessors of lands or annual-rents, to their bargains.

In 1421 the same Pope issued a Bull confirming their possessions to the Abbot and Canons; and it is then that we find for the first time in the charters any notice of the church of Dollar as belonging to the Monastery—a church in connection with which, and its saintly Vicar, Thomas Forret, one of the Canons of Inchcolme, its highest distinction was reached.

In the same year, 1421, there is a charter of confirmation by Janet, Prioress of the Nunnery of Haddington, of the donation made by Allan White, chaplain, to the Abbot and Convent of Inchcolme, of tenements lying in Nungait and Nunside, on the east side of the water of Tyne, beside the burgh of Haddington. This grant, as appears from a charter in the collection at Donibristle, was made by the chaplain for the benefit of his own soul, and those of his predecessors and successors; and with the view of keeping a lamp burning in the choir of the church of the Monastery.

About the same time, or a little earlier, during Abbot Walter's term of office, Sir James Douglas, lord of Dalkeith, made over to the Monastery the lands of BREGO, in the barony of Aberdour, with the common pasture of the lands and moor of Buchlyvie. The charter of Sir James Douglas seems to be lost; but I have a copy of a charter of James, Earl of Morton, of date October 31, 1480, confirming the grant by his grandfather. And in this charter there are one or two interesting details. The persons to be prayed for are King James the Third, and Margaret, his queen, with all their predecessors and successors; Sir James de Douglas, the original donor of the land; the Earl himself, with his predecessors and successors, and all the faithful dead. And it is noteworthy that the Earl assigns as reasons why he has renewed and confirmed the grant, the singular

favour which he cherishes for the Monastery, and St. Columba, its patron.

Finally, in the year 1500, King James the Fourth erected the town of Wester Aberdour into a burgh of barony, in favour of the Abbot and Convent. This, however, falls to be noticed more at length at a later stage.[1]

I have thus noticed, in a general way, all the possessions of the Monastery, which are referred to in the Register of the Abbey, and such other charters as I have been able to lay my hands on. No doubt there are other possessions which are still unaccounted for. At one time there must have been evidents for these too; but they seem now to be irrecoverably lost. In the absence of such documents, our information has to be drawn from a Retour of the lands and other possessions of the lordship of St. Colme, of date October 27, 1642. But as this document contains the names of the entire possessions of the Monastery erected into a temporal lordship, without any information regarding the persons by whom they were bestowed, or the circumstances connected with their tenure, there awaits you a serious trial of patience, as I enumerate them in the order of the counties to which they belong. My excuse for this infliction is, that it would be a grave defect, in a lecture professing to give an account of the Monastery, to leave any of them unnamed. And to the inhabitants of Aberdour most of the names must be quite familiar.

The possessions of the Abbey in Fife are enumerated in the document, to which I have just referred, in the following order:—The Monastery and Manor-place of St. Colme's Inch; the island itself; the lands and barony of Beath; the lands of Croftgarie, Brego, and Muirton of Beath, with its mill and mill-lands; the lands of Whitehill, Easter and Wester; the lands of Bowpric; the lands of Inchbeardie; the lands of Newton, with its brewery and brew-lands, extending to four acres or thereby; the lands of Kaikinch,

[1] See Appendix II.

Cuttlehill, Seaside, Knocksodrum, Prinlaws, Donibristle, Grange, Barnhill; nineteen acres lying at Grange, and six acres called Kaikinch; the Kirkcrofts of Dalgety and Auchtertool, with the meadow of the last named; the lands of Kilrie, Inchkeirie, Leuchats-beath, and the mill called Pascar Mill; the lands called St. Cereot's lands, in the barony of Fordell; the lands of Easter and Wester Buchlyvie; the lands of Bancliro; the Kirkcrofts of Leslie and Rosyth; the lands called Sisterlands, on the east side of the burn of Aberdour; an acre and a half of land at the west end of the town of Aberdour; tenements and roods of land on the west side of the burn at Aberdour, which anciently belonged to the said Monastery. The mill and mill-lands of Aberdour Wester, with the pasturage and astricted multures of Donibristle, Barnhill, Grange; the acres and roods of land on the west side of Aberdour, Whitehill, Bowprie, Cuttlehill, Westerside, Easterside, Easter and Wester Buchlyvies, Newton, Inchmartin, Croftgarie, Brego, Kaikinch, and Brewland of Newton, lying in the barony of Aberdour; the lands of Glassmont-hill; the half-ploughgate (fifty-two acres) of land, lying at the church of St. Maleing, now called Inchkerie, with the chapel of Buthadlach, now called Egilsmalye; Kynnachan, and the two Kincarnies, Over and Nether; two oxgates (twenty-six acres) of the lands of Middleton; the lands of Clunet, now called Clunevane, with the mill of Fordell, and the entire lands astricted to it; the lands called the 'Crossaikers,' situated within the lands of Otterston; a toft in Tibbermuir, with each and all of the lands of the barony of Beath; the town of Aberdour on the west side of the burn, with the privilege of a burgh of barony; the isles of Mickery, Carkery, and Haystack, with the 'seamark' and sea privileges; the under-written annual rentals:—forty shillings sterling out of the lands of Strathenry; twenty shillings out of the church of Cramond; eight shillings out of Couston; fourteen shillings out of Cullelo; ten shillings of silver out of Over-Balmule; twenty shillings of

silver out of Balledmonth; fifteen shillings of silver out of the mill of Lundy; fourteen shillings out of the mill of Fordell; fifty-three shillings and fourpence out of the mills of Cramond; three shillings out of the lands of Craigin; thirteen shillings and fourpence out of Waldeve's Kincarnie (Cockairnie); twelve shillings out of 'Kingsdomine,' and the lordship of Kinghorn; with the tithes of the aforesaid parish churches of Aberdour, Dalgety, Rosyth, Leslie, and Beath: all of which formerly belonged to the Abbacy of St. Colme's Inch.

The following possessions in the county of EDINBURGH are also enumerated:—The mill of Cramond; the lands of Chalmerston; the lands of Caldside, in the barony of Lochquharret; the lands of Coatfield, within the territory of Restalrig; a tenement in the town of Leith; a toft in the burgh of Edinburgh; an annual rental of twenty shillings out of the church of Cramond; an annual-rent of twenty-three shillings and fourpence out of the mills of Cramond.

In the county of PERTH, two possessions are named:—The croft of the church of Tibbermure, and a toft in Tibbermure. In HADDINGTONSHIRE, two rigs of land at the burgh of Haddington, and two tofts in the burgh of Haddington. In the county of LINLITHGOW, the lands of Duddington.

Before leaving the question of the possessions of the Monastery, I have to tell you something of their alienation. To alienate is always an easier thing than to acquire, and there is not much romance in the process. Something must however be said, first of all, regarding the feuing of the monasterial lands. The practice of feuing lands belonging to Religious Houses was one that was resorted to in very early times. We have already seen the Abbot and Convent of Inchcolme feuing the lands of Inchmartin from the Bishop and Chapter of Dunkeld; and, at a much earlier period, we have noticed the church of Dunkeld feuing the island of Leverith from the Monastery of Inchcolme, and then keeping it, as if it were absolutely their own. It was

not, however, always to churchmen that ecclesiastics feued their lands; and about the beginning of the sixteenth century, there was rather a brisk trade carried on in this line. Echoes, of a pretty distinct kind, were filling the air of Scotland, which told of sledge-hammer blows dealt to the Papacy by the brawny arms of Luther. The truth was dawning on the minds of our forefathers that monasticism was a mistake, if not something worse, and that the arguments by which monastic institutions had acquired their vast possessions were not of a kind known to primitive Christianity, or encouraged by its doctrines. Purgatory, it began to be suspected, had been invented for the special behoof of churchmen and their hungry money-bags. The Bible, now beginning to be circulated, although at first stealthily, appeared to ignore it altogether; and our Lord seemed to be ignorant of its existence, when he said to the dying penitent, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' Moreover, it began to be asked if the right sort of prayer might not, after all, be chiefly that which men, in earnest about their souls, offer up for themselves; and whether, in this view of the matter, monks and friars, and even Augustinian Canons, had not quite enough of responsibility lying on their shoulders, on their own account, without burdening themselves still more, by becoming answerable for others. In short, in proportion as the Bible was studied, it appeared clearly that the doctrine of Justification by Faith was its teaching; and men began to ask whether, seeing their forefathers had gifted away their broad acres under a grave mistake, their representatives should not get them back again. These and similar views greatly helped on the much-needed work of reformation, and they imparted immense activity to the business of feuing the lands of the monastic institutions throughout the country; for by this process, additional defenders of the existing rights of property were called into the field.

For the information which I am now to lay before you,

I am again indebted to the kindness of the Hon. John Stuart. There are unfortunately no dates attached to the document which shows how the possessions of the Monastery of Inchcolme were feued. The information, as far as it goes, is however perfectly authentic, and in most cases the date is approximately fixed by the names of the feuars.

The lands of Prinlaws were set in feu to Sir John Melville of Raith, for twelve pounds yearly. The lands of Donibristle, Barnhill, and Grange, with nineteen acres lying near the same, and six acres called Caikinch, were set in feu to Andrew, Lord Stewart of Ochiltree, for fifty-nine pounds three shillings and fourpence yearly. The glebe of Kirkcroft of Dalgety was set in feu to Henry Stewart, for six pounds fourteen shillings and twopence yearly. The Isle of St. Colme and Abbey place thereof, with houses, etc., were set in feu to James Stewart, son and apparent heir of James Stewart of Doun, for three pounds six shillings and eightpence yearly. The lands of the Muirtown of Beath, with the half of Knocksodrum, were set in feu to Henry Stewart, for fifty-two shillings and fourpence yearly. The half lands of Whitehill, with the brew-house of Newton, were set to David Phin, for twelve pounds yearly. The lands of Cuttlehill and Seaside were set to John Wemyss, for four pounds yearly. In addition to this sum, John Wemyss obliged himself to give, yearly, twelve capons, or eightpence for each; six days' work of a shearer, or fourpence for each; making his feu-duty four pounds ten shillings in all. Capons would be thought dead cheap at eightpence each, now-a-days; and a shearer would look askance at a groat dropped into the palm of his hand, as payment for a day's work in the harvest-field. But the one statement throws light on the other, provisions being as much cheaper than they are now, as the wage was then smaller. The Kirklands of Auchtertool, and the meadow thereof, were set in feu to Agnes Balmanno, and David Boswell, her spouse, for three pounds seven shillings and fourpence yearly, 'with ane

servand and ane horse, to lead the teinds of Ochtertule in hervest;' and two capons. From this statement you will see that 'women's rights' were not only recognised in the transaction, but the wife's name stands first. We also get a glimpse of the servant and horse conveying the teind-sheaves, on some bright harvest day, to the teind-barns at Aberdour. There is no notice of a cart, and the likelihood is, as a hint a little further on will show, that the sheaves were piled on a 'sled' or sledge, and so dragged to the teind-barns. The lands of Kilrie were set in feu to James Stewart, son and heir to James Stewart of Doun, for thirteen pounds, thirteen shillings and fourpence yearly. The lands and barony of Beath were set in feu to James Stewart, brother of Andrew, Lord Ochiltree, for forty-four pounds seven shillings yearly. The lands of Bowprie, Inchbeardie, and wester part of Whitehill, were set in feu to James Burn, for twelve pounds five shillings yearly. The feuar of these lands was further bound to pay to the Convent fifteen shillings and twopence for 'pittances;' twenty-four fowls; 'twelve shearers' darg in Dunibristle Maynes, with two horses and two sleddis.' He was also burdened with the carriage of 'miln-stones and stuling, to the miln of Aberdour.' The mill and mill-lands of Aberdour Wester, with its astricted multures, were set to Walter Cant, for six pounds, six shillings and eightpence, and twelve capons. The Kirklands and glebe of Rosyth were set to Allan Coutts, for a sum that is illegible in the document. The lands of Balcliro and Kirk-croft of Leslie were set to George Oliphant, for four pounds five shillings yearly. The lands of Easter and Wester Boclavies (Buchlyvies) were set to James Stewart, son of Sir James Stewart of Doun, for twenty-five pounds, thirteen shillings and fourpence. The lands of Newton, Caikinsh, etc., were set to the said James Stewart, for twenty-four pounds four shillings yearly. The lands of Croftgarie and Brego were set to the said James Stewart, for twenty pounds seven shillings

yearly. The lands of Dodyngston with Cramond mill, and Pascar mill, were set in feu to James Stewart, brother of Andrew, Lord Ochiltree, for twenty-six bolls of wheat, three chalders of bear (or three chalders and eight bolls of oats), with thirty-six capons, eighteen poultry, one sow, two geese, and thirteen pounds, eleven shillings and eightpence, in money. The lands of Coldside were set in feu to Robert Falside and Mary Maitland his spouse, for thirteen shillings and fourpence yearly. The lands of Clarbertston were set in feu to James Forrester of Corstorphine, for forty shillings and sixpence. And last of all, two rigs near Haddington were set in feu to James Oliphant, burgess in Edinburgh, for ten shillings and fourpence yearly.

The whole annual income represented by these sums, without taking into account the payments in kind, is over two hundred and seventy pounds.

To feu is not, properly speaking, to alienate ; for the feu-duties may flow into the old purse. But in the present case, alienation was not far distant; as, indeed, we might conclude, when the Abbot and Canons feued not only the little island that was their kingdom, but the very 'Abbey place thereof.' It now remains for me to tell you how the revenues drawn from the lands thus set in feu found their way into another money-bag than that of the Abbot and Canons of Inchcolme. This, however, must be told in as succinct a way as possible.

Sir James Stewart of Beath was the third son of Andrew, Lord Evandale, and brother of Andrew, Lord Ochiltree, to whom reference has already been made. Sir James was a man of considerable ability, and in great favour with King James the Fifth, who appointed him Constable of the Castle of Doune and Steward of Menteith. He had sufficient interest with Pope Paul the Third to get his son James appointed one of the Canons of St. Colme's Inch. This was effected by a Bull issued in August 1544; the object, no doubt, being to get him appointed Commendator of the

Monastery by and by. At this time Richard Abercromby was Abbot, and not Henry, as Spotiswood says. Richard seems to have made up his mind to retire, with the view of making way for James Stewart; and the promotion of the latter, from the position of a simple Canon to that of Commendator, was speedily accomplished. For in 1545, and again in 1546, letters were issued by Queen Mary, instructing the Sheriff of Fife to see to it, that the rights of James Stewart as Commendator of the Abbey were respected, and making reference to the Bull of Pope Paul the Third as carrying with it the force of Stewart's appointment to the benefice. It was in this way that Sir James Stewart, the younger, became Commendator of the Abbey. Richard, the former Abbot, lived for some years after this; for while I write I have lying before me an acknowledgment of his, signed at Donibristle, on the last day of January 1548. James, Lord Doune, the Commendator, died in 1590, having resigned his office into the hands of Henry, his second son. His eldest son, the brother of Henry, was the 'Bonny Earl of Moray,' who was so barbarously slain at Donibristle, by Gordon of Buckie.[1] In 1611, King James erected the possessions of the dissolved Abbacy into a temporal lordship, in favour of Henry, with the title of Lord St. Colme. Henry was succeeded in his title and lordship by his son James; and he having died abroad, while fighting under the banner of Gustavus Adolphus, his title and possessions fell to his cousin James, Earl of Moray —the son of the Bonny Earl, and, on his mother's side, the grandson of the Good Regent: and in the hands of his descendants they continue to the present day.

It does not fall within the scope of this lecture to say much regarding the fortunes of Inchcolme, or the dismantled Abbey, subsequent to the overthrow of monastic institutions, at the period of the Reformation. But a few outstanding facts demand notice.

[1] See Appendix III.

We have already seen that, in anticipation of the Reformation, 'the isle of St. Colme and Abbey place thereof, with houses, etc., were set in feu to James Stewart, son and apparent heir of James Stewart of Doun, for three pounds six shillings and eightpence yearly.' Among the Acts of the Scottish Parliament, in the year 1581, there is to be found the following, 'Confirmatioun of the infeftment of fewferme of the Ile, Abbay, and Mansioun of Sanct-colmis Insh,' which gives us some curious glimpses of the uses to which the dismantled Monastery was sometimes put:—

'Forsamekle as be diuerss actis of Parliament maid of befoir concerning the reformatioun of religioun within this realme The Monkreis ar altogidder abolishit And thair places and abbayis for the maist pairt left waist namelie the abbay of Sanctcolmis Insh quhilk of ancient tyme quhen the samyn wes Inhabit be the abbay [Abbot] and conuent thairof wes at diuerss tymis takin be the Englishmen than enemeis to our realme, and seruit vnto thame as ane fortalice and strong hold agains our soueran lordis guid subiectis Be occasioun quhairof the cuntreis liand about wer be the enemie infestit and trublit, And at sum vther tymis sen the reformatioun of the religioun within this realme, Sen the quhilk tyme this abbay wes left desert the same hes bene receptakle to Piratis, And may heirefter be diuerss apperance serve to the elyke Inconvenientis, And can na wayis be proffitable to our souerane lord nor his realme, Except the samyn be in the handis of ane speciall tennent quha may foirsie and provide that the said Ille with the abbay mansioun dowcat and zairdis being thairin may be put to sum proffitable use; AND THAIRFOIR our said souerane lord with auise of his saidis thrie estatis of this present parliament Ratefeis appreuis and confermis the infeftment of fewferme of the said Ille abbay mansioun howss zairdis and dowcat thairof with all thair pertinentis maid be Sir James Stewart of downe knycht Commendator of the said abbay with consent of the convent thairof

To vmquhill Archibald Ergyill his airis and assignais Togidder with the Infeftment maid be the said erll to James now erll of Murray his airis and assignais with all that followit thairvpon To the effect the said Ille abbay mansioun houss zairdis and dowcat thairof with all the pertinentis abone writtin may remane with the said James erll of Murray his airis and assignais abone mentionat as thair propertie in all tyme cuming.'

From another Act of Parliament of the year 1607, 'in fauouris of the Erle of Murray,' it appears that it was Richard Abercromby, the last of the Abbots, who in 1543 granted the 'charter of fewferme,' referred to in the Act which has just been quoted, to 'umquhile James Stewart, brother germane to umquhile Andro lord Vchiltrie, and umquhile dame Margaret Lyndesay, lady of Invermay, his spous.'

As an illustration of the use to which Inchcolme was put as a lazaretto, the following may be given, from Grant's *Old and New Edinburgh*,—a book of vast and varied research, which has come under the writer's eye when preparing this lecture for the press. Unfortunately the author of that book does not mention the precise date; but it seems to have been about the close of the sixteenth century.

'There was considerable alarm excited in Edinburgh, Leith, and along the east coast generally, by a plague which, as Moyes records, was brought from Dantzig by John Downy's ship, the *William of Leith*. By command of the Privy Council the ship was ordered, with her ailing and dead, to anchor on Inchcolm, to which place all afflicted by the plague were to confine themselves. The crew consisted of forty men, of whom the majority died. Proclamation had been made at the market-cross of every east coast town against permitting this fated crew to land. By petitions before the Council, it appeared that William Downie, skipper in Leith, left a widow and eleven children;

Scott, a mariner, seven. The survivors were afterwards removed to Inchkeith and the Castle of Inchgarvie, and the ship, which by leaks seemed likely to sink at her anchors, was emptied of her goods, which were stored in the vouts, or vaults, of St. Colm.'

Sir James Simpson, in an article contributed to the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 'On an Old Stone-roofed Cell, or Oratory, in the Island of Inchcolm,' —an article full of the fruits of research—notices that, as late as the year 1802, there was a fort in the east part of the island, with a corps of artillery stationed on it. Those who are interested in the modern condition of the island, and its monastic ruins, will find a good deal of information in the pages of Pennant and Grose; but to us the chief interest connected with the island centres in the Monastery and its living inhabitants. This lecture, moreover, has been spun out to an undue length, and we must leave such details alone.

I have left myself little space for moralising; but a few compressed sentences are all I have any wish to utter. The whole system of Monastic Institutions rested on mistaken ideas. These institutions were a violation of man's social nature, which rebels against celibacy; and when nature in any of its domains is violated, mischief is sure to follow. And the possessions of these institutions were, as a rule, acquired through a misunderstanding of Christian doctrine. Purgatory was an invention of the priests in the dark ages; and prayer for the dead is unavailing, else our Lord's reference to the 'great gulf fixed' has neither meaning nor force of application to the subject he was handling. But let us not fail to do justice to whatever good we find, either in the ecclesiastics or the laymen of the early times with which we have been dealing. The former did a good deal to establish ideas of law and order among the people. They were the conservators of the little learning that a Church, which had forgotten its true functions, had not

chased away. Had they known their Bibles better, and entered more into the spirit and modes of working of the Great Founder of Christianity and his earliest followers, they would have leaned less on mere human authority, and trusted more to individual intelligence and conscience. They would thus have been more useful, and the course of the people whom they influenced would have been an upward, and not a downward one, in all that dignifies mankind and adds to their happiness. And as regards the laymen of those early days, however mistaken they were as to the precise objects they had in view in the bestowal of their lands and other gifts on religious houses, it has at least to be admitted that they were in earnest about their souls. They acted up to the little light they had; while many, who are ready to laugh at their superstitious liberality, have no earnestness, and indeed no reality, in their religion at all. Let *us* seek to be true to the fuller light we have; and may the time never come when Scotchmen shall prove untrue to the three great watchwords: 'The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible;' 'The right of private judgment;' and 'Justification by faith in Christ alone'!

6.6.14

LECTURE VI.

The Regent Moray's birth, parentage, and upbringing—Made Prior of St. Andrews in the third year of his age—Other ecclesiastical honours heaped on the child—His youthful bravery—Accompanies the Princess Mary to France—His patriotism—Abandons the profession of Churchman—His place in the work of Reformation—Knox's influence over him—Compelled to abandon the cause of the Queen-Regent—A Commissioner to France to invite Queen Mary to return to Scotland—His devotion to her—His marriage, and Knox's sermon on the occasion—Quells disturbances on the Borders—The battle of Corrichie—Popish Plots—His opposition to the Queen's marriage with Darnley—Flees into England—Returns after the death of Rizzio—Darnley's murder, and Mary's favour for Bothwell—Moray at the French Court—Mary's imprisonment in Lochleven Castle—Moray's interview with her—Accepts the Regency—Character of his government—Mary's escape from Lochleven Castle—Battle of Langside—Moray's efforts to save Mary's life—His assassination at Linlithgow—Testimonies of friendly and unfriendly historians to his worth.

AMONG the great names that adorn Scottish history, few hold a higher place than that of the Regent Moray; and in any true view of one of the greatest epochs in the annals of our country—the period of the Reformation—his influence cannot but command attention. Moreover, in a neighbourhood where his title has been worn, for well-nigh three centuries, by his descendants through one of his daughters, ignorance of the leading facts and features of his life cannot be other than blameworthy. Endowed by nature with a vigorous and capacious mind, he was, in spite of circumstances connected with his birth, which were decidedly adverse, thrown by Providence in the way of men who exerted a powerful influence over him for good; and casting himself warmly into movements both of a political

and religious kind, which the circumstances of the time urgently demanded, he became great in many spheres. I shall now attempt to give you glimpses of the man in the various spheres in which the records of history hold him up to our view.

James Stewart, or Stuart, as it is now the fashion to spell his name, was a natural son of James the Fifth. His mother was Lady Margaret Erskine, daughter of John, twelfth Lord Erskine, and fifth Earl of Mar. She was afterwards married to Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven. Thus, on his father's side, James Stuart was a step-brother of Mary Queen of Scots, and, on his mother's side, step-brother of William, the first Earl of Morton, of the house of Lochleven, and of Sir George Douglas, who assisted the Queen in her escape from Lochleven Castle. The precise year of the future Regent's birth is not with certainty known. It is, however, generally believed that he was born in 1533. Among the papers in the charter-room at Donibristle is a precept of James the Fifth, which I have seen, appointing William Durham, of Grange, 'attorney for the King's well-beloved first-born natural son, James Stewart, in all actions affecting his interests.' This paper is dated the 19th of July, in the twenty-second year of the King's reign,—that is, in 1534, which is in harmony with the supposition that the young Lord James was born in the previous year. From the circumstances attending his birth, and the character of the times, there did not naturally lie before the child the brightest prospects of a sound education and a godly upbringing; and indeed we have little information regarding his early years. This much we know, that he was intended by his father for the Church. If any are inclined to regard this as a pious resolution on the part of the King, I must at once undeceive them. James the Fifth was not the man to be much affected by such considerations. He knew well the abuses of the Church of the period, and was not slow to express his

views of the corruption that infected the clergy; but under that state of matters he had more liberty of action, in a certain direction, than he could hope for after Reformation had done its work. I allude to his appropriation of the revenues of some of the fattest livings in the Church to his own use, by appointing his natural sons, in their infancy, to them. Particular instances of this mode of procedure present themselves in connection with the subject of our sketch. When only in his third year the child was made Prior of St. Andrews, a proceeding the enormity of which will more clearly appear if we suppose a child three years of age in our own days made Bishop of a diocese in England, or placed at the head of a Divinity Hall in Scotland. The chief functions of a Prior, in King James's eyes, must have been to draw the revenue of the benefice; and he probably consoled himself with the thought that *he* was quite able to do this for the infant Prior. But the corruption of the Church, which in many instances, and in the most unblushing manner, permitted such arrangements, shows how much John Knox was needed in Scotland. To render some apparent service for princely income thus received, the child seems henceforth to have been called 'the Prior.' It is related, in connection with a period in the history of our country when military honours were too liberally bestowed, that a soldierly father, on wishing to know the cause of a more than usual uproar in the nursery, got for answer that it was only 'the Major greetin' for his parritch.' It is not unlikely that similar demonstrations were sometimes made by the youthful 'Prior.'

Few details regarding James Stuart's education have come down to us. It has been stated by some writers that he had the celebrated George Buchanan for his tutor; but Buchanan's pupil was another son of the King's, inheriting the same name—the boy Abbot of Kelso and Melrose. In whatever way received, the Prior got the best

education his own country, in the first instance, could afford, and then he was sent to France, the University of Paris being at the time the chief fountain at which Buchanan himself, and the most of our great Scottish scholars of that period, drank. In this way the future Regent acquired habits of study and stores of learning which raised him immeasurably above the rude barons who surrounded him, and also above the great mass of the half-educated churchmen of the period. In these years of patient study, the foundation was laid of the greatness he afterwards displayed as the friend and promoter of the civil and religious liberty of his country. At this early time, however, he could never dream of the chequered, yet in the main noble, career that lay before him. Through the patronage of his father, whose sharp eye to his own worldly interest must ever have been on the outlook for greater honours to his son, the Priory of Pittenweem was added to that of St. Andrews, and, when the wearer of these honours was only eleven years of age, he got still further the Priory of Macon in France. Of course his age unfitted him for performing any of the duties connected with these offices, but that was no barrier to his getting such prizes in places so far remote. It was, to be sure, thought necessary to get the Pope's dispensation, in order that a child might hold three benefices at once. This, however, was easily secured. The gold key, at that time, opened every lock, even in sacred Rome; and, as an acknowledgment of the boon conferred, the boy went through the form of swearing fealty to his holiness Pope Paul the Third.

The Prior's career, however, was to be less in the Church than in the tented field, less in the camp than in the senate-house and at Court. And while he seems never to have cared much for an ecclesiastical life, the germs of a liking for the other spheres named speedily showed themselves. While only fifteen, he showed that he belonged to the

Church Militant in a sense not quite orthodox. In 1548, when Scotland was invaded by English troops, a fleet under Lord Clinton was sent to the Firth of Forth to co-operate with English land forces. This fleet made a descent on the Fife coast at St. Monans, and caused great consternation. The Laird of Wemyss speedily opposed the English invaders; and the youthful Prior no sooner heard, at St. Andrews, of the threatened danger, than he mustered all the help that an unexpected call could gather together, and, along with Wemyss, repulsed the English with great slaughter. It is generally admitted that on this occasion the Prior, although a mere lad, gave indications of that cool and determined bravery, the benefit of which Scotland reaped at later times and on more hotly contested fields.

It is difficult to trace the various journeys to France which Lord James, as he now began to be called, made about this time. When his sister Mary, afterwards Queen of Scots, went to France, a child six years old, accompanied by her 'four Maries'—Mary Beaton, Mary Seaton, Mary Fleming, and Mary Livingston—Lord James sailed in the same royal galley. And from time to time we have traces of him, now in Scotland and now in France.

Grave changes had, however, taken place in our country, even before he sailed with his sister to France. His father had died of a broken heart, partly the result of the defeat sustained by his troops in their contests with those of England, and partly owing to the turbulent spirit of his nobles, which led the way to national dishonour. And, following closely on the death of the King, came a state of matters between Scotland and England not unlike what had existed after the death of Alexander the Third. Henry of England wished to espouse his eldest son, the Prince of Wales, to the Princess Mary of Scotland; and, balked in that project, he did what he could to enlist the Douglases, and other discontented nobles, in a shameful plot to make their country a mere province of England.

We are not called upon to enter minutely into the history of these and other intrigues, which now began to darken the horizon of our country's hopes. We have only to look at the attitude towards them taken up by Lord James. And it has to be said that, in all the movements of that dark time, he occupied, what was regarded by those best qualified to judge, the most loyal ground. Even when Mary of Guise became Regent, although she was a woman who seemed willing to sacrifice the best interests of Scotland to French ideas of politics and religion, Lord James was firmly on her side in opposition to England. And in 1557 we find him, Prior of St. Andrews as he still was, making an incursion into England, accompanied by Lord Robert Stuart, another of the King's many natural sons, who, as we might have expected, was also a Church dignitary, being Abbot of Holyrood. The two Churchmen and their followers did not inflict much damage on England, nor do they seem to have suffered much either. In the same year we find Lord James in France, as a commissioner from Scotland to attend the marriage of his sister to the Dauphin. By this time the subject of our sketch appears to have abandoned all idea of remaining in the service of the Church. The current of Reformation views, setting in strongly from Germany and England, had already made it evident that the old corrupt state of affairs could not be much longer tolerated. Cardinal Beaton's intrigues in State affairs, especially his shameful forgery of a document, purporting to be signed by the late King, appointing that wily ecclesiastic Regent of the kingdom, must have opened the eyes of many to the policy of the Churchmen of the time. The barbarities of Beaton, which at length drew assassination down on him, had brought the Reformers, and their doctrines and aims, more fully before the mind of the country. Above all, the Bible had been given to the people in a language they could understand; and, along with the reading of the Word, the preaching of the

Evangel by Knox and his fellow-labourers had awakened the people from a long spiritual sleep. The sagacious could see that the country was on the verge of important religious changes. Already the death-knell of Popery was sounded, in the tones of a faithfully preached Gospel. The first great instrument, in the hand of God, in bringing about the Reformation in Scotland was John Knox; the second was Lord James Stuart.

To trace all the steps by which this remarkable man was led from being a devoted friend, and even a partisan, of his sister and her mother, the Queen-Regent, till he took up the position of thorough independence of judgment, and then that of antagonism to both, would far exceed the limits of this sketch. On this subject the most conflicting opinions are held and defended by historians of different schools. Some maintain that disappointed ambition was the cause of his alienation from his sister; and that in all the steps he subsequently took, he had only his own aggrandisement at heart. Others, again, assert that only the purest and noblest motives, and a clear view of what was to serve the highest interests of his country, affected him. We cannot espouse either of these views, pure and simple. That ambition alone was the mainspring of such a noble career we believe to be unsupported by trustworthy evidence, and indeed self-contradictory; while, on the other hand, we are not prepared to admit that the regency was never the object of his ambition, or that he had, from the first, a clear view of the noble course he was to run, or a firm purpose to make it so entirely subservient to the highest interests of patriotism and religion. Like many others, who are instruments in a higher Hand, he came to see, bit by bit, the task assigned him; and many a time found himself used to bring about ends that he had only dimly foreseen, or had not thought of at all. But even with these limitations, if it does not evidently appear, ere we have done, that James Stuart was one of the noblest and best of the many

great men of whom our country can boast, the fault will lie with the writer, and not with his subject.

Some who are never at a loss to find reasons, however sordid, for the actions of a public man, have asserted that the change which came over Lord James's career, immediately after his sister's marriage, was due to disappointed ambition. They say that at this time he sought from Mary the earldom of Moray, but that, acting on the advice of her mother, she refused it, promising him, however, instead of the earldom, a bishopric, either in England or France,—an honour, we may suppose, much less to his taste. There is, we believe, no reason to doubt that the request was made, and the refusal given; but there is not sufficient evidence for the existence of the estrangement, which is alleged to have immediately followed, and still less proof that Lord James's future career was due to disappointed ambition. Other thoughts and feelings were now in his mind.

When Knox preached the doctrines of the Reformation, in Calder House, in 1555, to a number of the nobility and gentry of Scotland,—who honoured themselves as much as they honoured him in being present,—there were three noblemen among his audience who afterwards took a leading part in the history of their times. These were Archibald, Lord Lorn; John, Lord Erskine; and Lord James Stuart. Lord James was now in the twenty-second year of his age, and fully alive to the important work that had begun in Scotland. This, however, was not the first time he had met the Reformer. Knox, in his History, speaks of having met him in London, at an earlier time, and has not failed to relate that the talents and energy of the young man left a most favourable impression on him. The influence of Knox over the minds of the three noblemen just named, during his ministrations at Calder House, was very great; indeed it may with safety be affirmed that the impressions then made were never effaced. After Knox's return to Geneva, it was a letter written by these three noblemen,

along with the Earl of Glencairn, that induced the Reformer to bid farewell to his flock in that town, and turn his face homewards again. And when he did return, they gave him strong and steady support. No doubt they did not in everything see eye to eye; as indeed, at a transition time, when new and unexpected events were continually turning up, even good men, looking at things from somewhat different points of view, could hardly be expected to do. When Knox had returned home, and preached with fiery zeal against Popish idolatry at Perth, the 'rascal multitude,' as he calls them, took a shorter and ruder method of showing their convictions than he or the other leading Reformers approved of. This led to some unpleasant complications. The Queen-Regent vowed that she would be avenged on those who had been guilty of these tumults, saying that she would raze the town of Perth to its foundations, and sow it with salt. And she evidently meant what she said in this case; for she immediately raised an army and marched towards Perth. And in that army marched Lord James Stuart. But, as he afterwards declared, he did so, not because he had abandoned the Reformers, or their work, but because he wished the movement to go on, if possible, without a breach of the peace. He speedily found, however, that the question he had to settle was whether he would heartily side with honest men, who not only meant what they said, but would abide by what they promised; or with the Queen-Regent, who promised anything to the Reformers that secured delay, and then openly, when it suited her, flung her promises to the winds, saying she was not bound to keep faith with heretics! The result was that Lord James abandoned the Queen-Regent and her party, being unable to trust in her promises, and he threw himself unreservedly into the reforming party, as one of the Lords of the Congregation. By taking up this position, Lord James laid himself open to many charges. By some it was said that he had, in so acting, placed himself, along with the Reformers, in an attitude of

rebellion ; while by others it was asserted that he was aiming at the Crown. But there was not the slightest foundation for either charge. His resistance to the authority of the Queen-Regent was caused by her own breach of promise ; this resistance was only partial, protecting the undoubted right of free subjects to reform abuses in religion, and put down idolatry; and it was intended to be temporary, that is, until these rights were respected. Then with regard to the assertion that Lord James was attempting to grasp the crown, that was a cuckoo-song of the Queen-Regent's, which was raised against the Earl of Arran when he joined the Reformers, as well as against Lord James; and with just as much truth in the one case as in the other. And with reference to another accusation against Lord James and the Reformers—that they were secretly in correspondence with England and Queen Elizabeth,—that was quite true. But there are two remarks to be made regarding it, which will help to put the matter in its true light. First of all, it was the Queen-Regent who taught them that game. She drew immense supplies, both in the shape of soldiers and money, from France, to crush the Reformers ; and if she was leaning to such an extent on France, surely the Reformers cannot be blamed, if they also sought the aid of a power friendly to them and their cause. Moreover, there was nothing traitorous in their correspondence with England. They sought aid to enable them to secure their undoubted rights. The Queen-Regent, on the other hand, sought and obtained the aid of France to crush freedom of opinion, and purity of worship in Scotland. These matters are so often perverted, even in histories written in our own time, that I could not let the opportunity slip of putting them in their true light.

On the death of the Queen-Regent, in June 1560, James Stuart was appointed one of the Lords of the Articles; and in the following year he was deputed, by a Council of the nobility, to go to France and invite Queen Mary, now

a widow, to return to Scotland. This commission, which, in the circumstances, was a very delicate one, he performed with great tact and fairness. Affairs in Scotland were now in a very different condition from what they had been when Mary left it, a child six years old. The Protestant religion was now not only tolerated by the State,—it was virtually the religion of the country. But Mary, during her residence in France, had all the while been living in the very focus of Popery, and had undergone no change of opinion in regard to it. Lord James had stipulated that the Queen, on her return, should have the liberty of worshipping in accordance with her own convictions. At the same time it was evident that a Popish Queen ruling over a Protestant people would give rise to serious complications; and he used his influence to guide the Queen in such a way as to lessen these evils, if they could not be entirely avoided. It was evident, too, from the known tendencies of Mary's maternal relatives in France, especially the Cardinal Lorraine and the Duke of Guise, that use would be made of her position in Scotland to injure the prospects of Protestantism; and in the interests of the Reformed Faith Lord James had to discover what their plans were. Altogether the mission was a very difficult one; and few could have acquitted themselves so well in the circumstances as he did.

On Queen Mary's return to her kingdom, Lord James took his place beside her, and was of the greatest service to her and the whole nation. He was well acquainted with European politics; was a good judge of character; and, with all his depth of insight into men and things, there was an apparent carelessness in his manner, and a blunt affableness which, it is said, led those who came into contact with him to tell him what was in their minds, without making them much the wiser regarding his own views. There can be no doubt that it is to be attributed to the tact and ability of her brother that the earlier period of Mary's reign in her own country was so placidly tided over.

Nor was it in the Council-Chamber alone that his services were rendered. His eye was vigilantly turned in many directions to discover abuses that needed correction; and his hand could wield the sword as efficiently as the pen.

We now reach an interesting period in the life of the subject of our sketch,—his marriage. There had been little of the ecclesiastic about him for long, if there ever was; and certainly there were very tempting baits thrown out to try his steadfastness in that matter. On his late journey to France he had been tempted, by the Queen and her uncles, the Guises, with the offer of a Cardinal's hat, and the highest ecclesiastical preferment, if he would only be reconciled to Rome. But no bribe could induce him to prove false to the Reformed Faith, and his honest convictions of what duty told him to do. The last vestige of his ecclesiastical character was lost, in the eyes of the Church of Rome, when he married—a step we would humbly recommend to the Pope, his cardinals and priests, and old bachelors of all persuasions and orders, as fitted to make them happier and better men. Among the rich collection of papers in the charter-room at Donibristle, there lies the marriage-settlement of Lord James Stuart and Dame Annas Keith, the daughter of the Earl Marischal. The document is yellow, and a good deal worn; and seeing it is more than three hundred years old this is little to be wondered at. But it is one of the most interesting relics in the possession of the Earl of Moray. The Earl Marischal was a friend to the Reformation cause, but at the same time a devoted subject of Queen Mary's. Indeed, so far did his devotion to her go, that, when she was in confinement in England he shut himself up in his castle of Dunnottar so closely, that he was known through all the neighbourhood by the name of 'William of the Tower.' To return to the subject of the marriage: it was celebrated with great solemnity and pomp. John Knox preached the sermon on the occasion in St. Giles's; and, complimenting

Lord James on the noble course he had already run, he advised him to hold on unwaveringly, *in case those who detected any failure should say it was his wife's fault!* The marriage was the occasion of great rejoicings; so much so, indeed, that many of the graver people were a good deal scandalised at the kind and amount of merriment that prevailed. On this occasion the Queen created her brother Earl of Mar, and gave a magnificent banquet in honour of the auspicious event.

Soon after his marriage the Earl went to the Border country to quell tumults that had reached no ordinary magnitude. Murders, robberies, and other crimes prevailed to an alarming extent there; and men who had been outlawed walked abroad as if they had done no wrong, or as if there were no law to be respected. The Earl repaired to Hawick, the headquarters of these lawless outbreaks, and inflicted prompt and condign punishment on the offenders. It gives us a strange picture of the lawlessness of the Borders at that time, and the terrible severity with which it was punished, when we read that, on this occasion, no fewer than fifty-three outlaws were apprehended in the town of Hawick, of whom eighteen were instantly drowned, 'for lack of trees and halters,' and six were hanged at Edinburgh. For a considerable time after this the Border country was quieter than it had for long been known to be.

By and by the Earl found a foeman worthier of his steel, in the person of the Earl of Huntly, who had been proclaimed a rebel because of several acts of lawless insubordination to his sovereign. After a desperate encounter at Corrichie, a hill about twelve miles from Aberdeen, Huntly and his faction were defeated, and Lord James, so lately created Earl of Mar, reached the higher and more substantial honour of the earldom of Moray, succeeding to the title and some of the estates which Thomas Randolph had enjoyed two centuries before.

For some time after this the Earl of Moray, as we must now call him, continued to render the most important services to his Queen and country. Mary was kept from many a blunder by the wisdom of her brother; and the only time when Moray and Knox had anything like a collision was when the former thought the fiery genius of Knox unnecessarily severe in dealing with Mary's personal predilections for Popery. Later times, however, proved that Knox knew Mary better than her brother did. Indeed, in some things, Mary succeeded in hoodwinking Moray. The Pope sent a messenger to her, with the view of involving her in a league with the other Catholic sovereigns of Europe, for the extermination of Protestantism. Maitland of Lethington was employed to bring about the interview with the Queen and the Pope's messenger in such a way as to elude the gaze of the Earl and the Reformers. The time chosen was when Moray and others, who would have been in the way, were attending public worship. But the sermon happened to be shorter than usual that day; and the messenger was with difficulty smuggled out of the audience-chamber in due time. As it was, Moray asserted that he had caught a glimpse of a strange visage; and the people outside began to whisper angry words about a foreign emissary, and the warm reception they felt inclined to give him, if they could only lay hands on him. We shall by and by see that the first dangerous trap into which Mary fell was just this one which the Pope's emissaries laid for her that day.

We now enter on a new and painful phase of the relations between the Queen and Moray. The question of the probable marriage of the widowed Queen began to receive a good deal of attention—for Mary did not hesitate to avow that she would marry again; and it was an important consideration, affecting the State, who her husband might be. In view of the religious condition of the country, this was an all-important consideration. The Queen's

hostility to the Reformed Faith could not be concealed; and on some occasions it would, in all likelihood, have shown itself in the form of open persecution but for the firmness of Moray. If she married a Roman Catholic, fresh complications were sure to spring from it; and the very existence of the Reformed Faith might be threatened. This to a certainty would stir the nation up to revolution. Lord Darnley, on whom Mary's choice seemed to rest, had not yet made any decided declaration of his religious views; but he and his father, the Earl of Lennox, were believed to be at heart Roman Catholics. Besides, Darnley was a weak and vain young man, whose head seemed already to be so much turned by the attention the Queen showed him, that he began to insult those who had long helped to govern the country; and people began to consider what might be expected of him if the 'crown matrimonial,' which Mary proposed to give him, were placed on his head. A remarkable interview between the Queen and her brother on this subject is recorded. At a moment when Moray was off his guard, Mary put a paper into his hands, requesting his signature to it. This was a formal approval of her marriage with Darnley, and an engagement, on Moray's part, to promote it to the extent of his power; and the Queen ordered him to sign it on pain of her severest displeasure. Moray calmly but firmly refused. 'Her resolution,' he said, 'was over hasty, and her demand on him too sudden and peremptory. What would foreign nations think of such precipitancy? What must be the opinion of the Queen of England, with whom her ambassador was, even then, in treaty, and whose answer she daily expected?' This was one aspect of the matter; but there was another, and higher. 'Most of all,' he declared, 'he would be loath to consent to her marriage with any one of whom there was so little hope that he would be a favourer of Christ's true religion, which was the thing most to be desired—of one who had hitherto

shown himself rather an enemy than a preserver of the same.' Angry, as well as surprised, at such determination, the Queen used every effort to induce him to abandon the ground he had thus taken up; but neither flattery nor threatening affected him; and he was dismissed from the presence of the Queen, amidst charges of ingratitude and threatenings of displeasure.

What Mary threatened, however hastily, she generally performed in the most decided way. Moray's enemies were now recalled to Court. Bothwell, who had conspired against his life, was invited to return. Lord George Gordon, the head of a faction bitterly opposed to Moray, was released from prison, and had the earldom of Huntly bestowed on him; and the Earl of Sutherland, who had been banished on account of his treasonable conduct at the battle of Corrichie, was recalled from exile. It was evident that both Mary and Darnley were bent on Moray's ruin, if not his death. When the Court was filled with his enemies, he was invited to return to it, and of course he refused to walk into a den of lions, thirsting for his blood. The summons was repeated and again declined, and Moray was proclaimed an outlaw. This blow annihilated all confidence he had hitherto placed in the Queen; and, a little further on, we shall have occasion to notice another blow by which his respect for her was utterly destroyed. Moray was now in danger of his life, and great fears were entertained for the interests of the Reformed Faith in the land. A number of the reforming nobles armed themselves in self-defence when affairs were in this condition. Mary, at the head of her troops, determined to put this attitude down as rebellion, and Moray had to flee into England.

The marriage of the Queen with the weak-minded and unprincipled Darnley was productive of the worst consequences to herself, her husband, and the country; and, but for the overruling hand of God, it must have been fatal to the best interests of the Reformed Faith, both in

Scotland and England. The facts that prove this position must be stated in few words. It cost Darnley his life, in circumstances that will be more fully and fitly told in connection with our sketch of the life of the Regent Morton. The circumstances in which Darnley's murder took place, and more especially the events which immediately followed it, irreparably destroyed all well-grounded respect for Mary's character, except in the eyes of those who look at such matters in the light of romance, instead of the well-established facts of history. In the very year that witnessed her marriage, Mary, the Queen of a Protestant people, at the instigation of her uncle, the Cardinal Lorraine, gave the weight of her name to one of the darkest and bloodiest schemes of the Church of Rome, for the extermination of Protestantism. This was an alliance, on the part of the Popish sovereigns of Europe, by which they swore to make an end of toleration, and to quench the rising cause of Protestantism in blood. Darnley, too, openly declared himself a Papist. It may fairly be questioned whether Mary did not, by her act in this matter, forfeit all title to the crown. It certainly was one of the most fatal errors of her life. Rizzio, her Italian secretary, was suspected, and we believe on good grounds, of being in the secret service of Rome; and although no one can justly defend such a deed of blood as his murder, it is distinctly traceable to the Queen's marriage with Darnley on the one hand, and the suspicions she herself had sown in the minds of her Protestant subjects on the other. Darnley, who had plotted the death of Rizzio, betrayed to the Queen his associates in the tragedy, and denied that he had any responsible share in it. But the part he acted in that matter, and the growing favour of the Queen for Bothwell, led to Darnley's own assassination; and that, too, not without strong suspicion of the Queen's complicity. Moray, who had returned from England immediately after the death of Rizzio, was to some extent received into Mary's

favour again; but there could never again be the cordiality between them that there had been. She had forfeited all claim to her brother's confidence, and she was speedily to annihilate the last grain of respect for her that he could honestly entertain. Laying aside the question of her complicity with the murder of her husband, her conduct immediately afterwards was of a kind fitted to destroy all respect for her as a woman; as all confidence in her as a queen had already been forfeited, by joining in the league to which we have lately referred. Her behaviour immediately after the murder of Darnley was indeed extraordinary. The guilt of Bothwell was patent even to the blindest; yet he continued in high favour with Mary. The most unnatural delay occurred ere efforts were made to bring the guilty persons to justice; and when exertions were made, it was rather with a view to punish those who accused Bothwell, than to deal with Darnley's murderers. The nation was horrified at this callousness. Evidence was known to exist, pointing to the smith who had made the false keys for the house in which Darnley was massacred, and to the person who had put the gunpowder into the cellar beneath the room in which he lay. All this pointed to lines of evidence, which, if followed up, might have revealed the guilty persons. The names of Mary and Bothwell began to be bandied about in a way that made investigation absolutely necessary. Yet nothing was done except by Bothwell himself, in the way of insolent bravado, which rather confirmed suspicion, already too well grounded. And in little more than a fortnight Mary and her Court were engaged in frivolous sports at Seaton, as if nothing out of the way had happened,—Mary and Bothwell contending with Hamilton and Seaton in a game of archery; and, when winning, causing the last-named noblemen to pay the forfeit, in the shape of a dinner at Tranent! These are facts for which the surest evidence can be adduced. Had a tradesman's or a peasant's widow done anything at all

analogous to this, we know what the verdict of neighbours would have been; and unless we are prepared to have one code of morals for the rich and great, and another for the poor and humble, we know what the verdict in Mary's case must be. A sham trial of Bothwell was gone through, and a hollow verdict pronounced. He overawed a number of the nobles to sign a deed recommending him as a husband to the Queen, already twice widowed. His poor wife was divorced that she might not stand in the way. Mary knew this, and to the remonstrances of her friends, who solemnly warned her of the impending consequences of a marriage with Bothwell, she declared that at all hazards she would have him. After an apparently violent attempt on the part of Bothwell to seize the Queen's person,—an attempt in which it is believed by many that she acquiesced,—the marriage took place; so that in about three months' time from the violent death of her husband, Mary married his murderer.

I have been thus minute in describing the events of this particular period, as they brought the Earl of Moray once more on the stage of public affairs; and the complexion of his actions assumes, to a large extent, the hue in which these transactions between Bothwell and Mary appear to different minds.

Think now on the unhappy nature of public affairs in Scotland immediately after Mary's marriage with Bothwell, and you will not wonder at the events which speedily followed. Granting even that Mary had no hand in the murder of Darnley, yet what was the nation to think of her marriage with one almost universally believed to be the murderer of her late husband? Could they ever after respect or trust their Queen, more especially when she was under the direct influence of Bothwell? What prospect was there of the personal safety, not to speak of the right education and training, of the infant prince? Already it was reported that Bothwell was scheming to get

the child—then under the care of the Earl of Mar at Stirling Castle—into his hands. And what prospect was there that the laws of the country, and the simplest rules of morality, would be respected under the guidance of one who had reached his high position by trampling both under his feet? Would the life or property of even the highest subject in the realm be safe under such a *régime?* And if Mary had been to any extent implicated in Darnley's murder, as her remissness in investigating the case led so many to believe, then how could the reins of government be left longer in her hands? The nobles of the country, in this posture of affairs, banded themselves together—under the leadership of Argyle and Morton, Moray being at the time in France—to call Bothwell to account for Darnley's death; and to make such arrangements as would render the government of the country possible. Mary and Bothwell armed, to put down the revolt, and the opposing forces met at Carberry Hill, without, however, coming to blows. The troops that Mary and Bothwell—now elevated to the rank of Duke of Orkney—had gathered around them deserted almost in a body to the standard of the nobles. Bothwell fled, and Mary put herself into the hands of the leaders of the people. The result you know. Mary was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle; her infant son was crowned King, and Moray was soon afterwards proclaimed Regent. Unhappy Mary! One must ever regret that she had not a more promising upbringing than she got at the licentious Court of France; wiser guides than her uncles of Guise, Darnley, and Bothwell; and better resting-places than Lochleven Castle and the grim shades of Fotheringay, to which her course was now tending.

But our business now is chiefly with the Regent. Moray had been four months at the Court of France, and had acquired such influence there that it was with difficulty he was allowed to leave. But he bent his steps homewards at the call of his country, now in the midst of intestine

feuds, and without a governing head. Not at once, however, did he accept the Regency. While in France he could not believe the assertions made of Mary's complicity in the murder of Darnley, and he was determined to investigate that matter most carefully. The memory of past wrongs, received at the hands of the Queen, would not, we may well believe, be permitted to hinder justice being done to her in her day of sorrow. Even when in France he had not sympathised with the measures which the nobles had taken, after the affair at Carberry; and he sent a messenger to Mary in her imprisonment, who was, however, prevented from seeing the Queen. Indeed it is admitted even by Tytler, who is not friendly to Moray, that he was, at this time, almost the only true and disinterested friend Mary had. Her nobles were nearly all against her, and that openly, with the exception of the Hamiltons. They too were, in reality, opposed to her, and were even secretly proposing that she should be put to death, in which case only the infant prince stood between the Earl and the Scottish Crown. The Reformers and the great mass of the people were against her, because of her guilty courses. The Court of France had ceased to befriend her on account of her perverse attachment to Bothwell, and counselled her confinement in a nunnery for life. Elizabeth of England, who never had borne her great goodwill, was now somewhat drawn to her in her time of suffering, moved, no doubt, by the consideration that it was wrong to treat a sovereign in this fashion. The English Court had indeed been horrified to learn, from its own accredited ambassador in Scotland, that a doctrine was openly avowed in the northern part of the island that kings and queens have no more right, either by the laws of God or the statutes of the realm, to implicate themselves in murder or other crimes than private persons have. This doctrine, fortunately, has not such an air of novelty about it now as it had then. To Moray, and to him alone, could

Mary now look for advice and guidance; and had she listened to his counsel, even at this late stage, her sun might not have gone down behind such lurid and crimson clouds.

Nearly the first thing that met Moray on his return to Scotland was what he considered conclusive evidence of Mary's participation in the crime of Darnley's murder. The contents of the far-famed silver casket, seized at Lochleven Castle, have given rise to many a controversy. These disputes cannot even be enumerated here, much less reopened and discussed. Suffice it to say that, while many hold the authenticity of the letters and sonnets, addressed to Bothwell by Mary, to be an open question, we cannot help thinking it closed, and closed in a way fatal to Mary's character. One of Moray's first efforts was to get an interview with his sister in her imprisonment at Lochleven; and he refused to accept the Regency without this condition being granted. The nobles feared that no good would come of it, but they had to consent. I know scarcely anything in all our Scottish history more sad and solemn than the record of that meeting in the Castle of Lochleven. It was the 15th day of August 1567. The hues of summer were yet in all their richness, and the blue waters of the loch rippled gently on its banks. But within the walls of the Castle winter seemed to reign; and in the heart of the royal prisoner a sullen tempest seemed to rage. Moray was accompanied by Morton, Athole, and Lindsay; and Mary received them with tears, complaining bitterly of the wrongs she suffered. Then, taking Moray aside, she tried to discover from him what the future had in store for her. But Moray's brow was clouded, and his usual open and affable demeanour had deserted him. Silent and dejected, he seemed unable to unburden his mind of a heavy grief,—a conviction of wrong-doing on Mary's part which he could not dissipate. The Queen implored him to tell her what the nobles had resolved to

do with her, and whether she was to die or live. She besought him, with tears, to tell her whatever was in his mind, however reproachful it might be. And then he told, with solemn faithfulness, the story of her misgovernment and misbehaviour; the crimes of which she had been guilty, and the alienation from her best friends, which she had thus brought about; and he urged her to betake herself to God as her only hope. The interview lasted till after midnight, and amidst tears and sobs, confessions and denials, the unhappy Queen felt the force of the truth that no one, however high in rank, can set aside the laws of God and escape suffering. Early on the following morning Moray was sent for by the Queen, and perceiving that his words of the previous evening had not been in vain, he threw some rays of consolation and hope into her troubled mind; telling her that, if she deplored her faults, there was still hope that her life would be spared, and that in these circumstances he would even sacrifice his life for her. He warned her, however, that almost everything would depend upon herself; and that if she made her escape from confinement, or entered into any intrigue to bring French or English troops into the country on her behalf, she might depend upon it that the nobles would be so exasperated that her life might be sacrificed. Clinging, as she so naturally did, to life, she heard his words with some gleams of hope and even comfort. She embraced him, and besought him to accept the Regency, which he agreed to do; and telling her attendants to treat her with all gentleness, Moray left the scene of this memorable interview. On the 22d of August he was proclaimed Regent, in the midst of many solemnities. With his hand on the Gospels he vowed that he would serve God according to His Word; that he would maintain the cause of true religion in the realm; that he would govern the country according to its laws; and that he would repress violence, wrong, and error.

There are marked differences of opinion regarding some

parts of Moray's career, considered as a private individual; but with reference to the character of his government as Regent, it may be said that there is no controversy. Those who write in the interests of a faction may well be supposed to have strong evidence facing them, when they so readily admit the excellence of an administration, the head of which they do not love. For when the public acts of the Regent are weighed, they are found to have combined in them the evidence which proves him to have been a far-seeing legislator, a patriotic statesman, a firm-handed ruler, and an able and good man. The inhabitants of a petty town or village, or even of a district, are often mistaken in the estimate they form of a man; but it is seldom the case that a whole nation falls into such a mistake. And the fact that the Scottish nation gave Moray the title of 'The Good Regent,' a title the bestowal of which has never been reversed, is sufficient to show how his administration of state affairs commended itself to his countrymen. Wise and salutary laws were enacted; justice was meted out with firm and equal hand to rich and poor; turbulence was checked and punished; life and property were respected; the authority of the government was acknowledged throughout the land; and in every act of his public life, the welfare of the people could be seen to be his aim. And we are not to hold that it was an easy task to bring the lawless and discordant elements of the Scottish nation, as they existed at that time, into harmony. Some flagrant wrongs, committed against the State, such as the murder of Darnley, had to be dealt with; and unfortunately, some of the most powerful of the nobles were suspected of having a hand in that crime. There are historians who have found fault with the Regent for not dealing in a more determined way with these offenders; and they give us to understand that, if they had been in the Regent's place, they would have managed affairs much better. But with all deference to these pen-and-ink statesmen, we may humbly venture to doubt

whether they would have managed so well as Moray did. The bond signed by the conspirators had been destroyed by Sir James Balfour ; and although Tytler does not hesitate to avow his belief that the contents of that paper were known to Moray, I think you will agree with me that, in such a case, more evidence is required than the conjectures of even a historian. Four of the conspirators were brought to the scaffold,—namely, Captain Blacater, Captain Cullen, Hay of Tallo, and Hepburn of Bolton ; and Bothwell himself only escaped because the ship of his pursuer, Kirkcaldy of Grange, stuck fast on a sandbank, which allowed the object of his anxious pursuit to escape to Norway.

While the Regent was busy trying to bring the murderers of Darnley to justice, the nation was startled by the news of Mary's escape from Lochleven Castle. Moray's warning to her had been to avoid the blunders of attempting to escape from imprisonment, or bringing French or English forces to her aid. In either case, he assured her, the result would likely be fatal, and so in the end it proved. The Regent's power had been employed to save Mary's life, at a time when it seemed almost hopeless to protect her ; and it was not employed in vain. But what could avert her fate now, when she not only did the very thing she had been warned against, as a fatal mistake ; but aggravated the doing of it by despatching a messenger to Bothwell, to tell him of her escape and bring him back to Scotland? This was a bold attempt, on her part, to bring back the old reign of terror, which, she might have known, the country would never submit to. Evidently, during her imprisonment, Mary had 'forgotten nothing and learned nothing.'

The Regent was at Glasgow, almost unattended, when he heard of Mary's escape, and her presence at Hamilton ; and the way in which he acted is acknowledged by all to have been a remarkable instance of cool forethought and skilful generalship. Collecting a small army from the neighbouring counties, he posted it at Langside, near a lane which

he knew Mary's followers must pass. A battle ensued, short and sharp, for it lasted only three-quarters of an hour. Mary's army, which was composed of the Hamiltons and their retainers, with a number of barons who had joined her standard, was thrown into confusion and defeated; and so skilfully had the Regent's army been posted and generalled, that, while three hundred of their opponents fell, only one soldier of Moray's band was left dead on the field. Mary fled to Dundrennan Abbey, in Galloway, and thence into England; and the Regent's position became stronger than ever.

Space does not permit us to follow Mary's eventful history, through all its turnings and windings, to its sad close; nor even to deal minutely with that part of it which bears most closely on the good name of the Regent. Moray has been blamed by many for the part he acted in giving evidence, at York, of Mary's guilt. That, no doubt, is an intensely painful incident in Moray's history; but we must bear in mind that, as Regent of the kingdom of Scotland, and charged with the maintenance and defence of her liberty, he had to act firmly and impartially in his public capacity, when his private feelings must have prompted him to hang back. Nor is it to be forgotten that, while Moray lived, Mary's life was secure. Nay, he made anxious but unavailing efforts to get her out of Elizabeth's hands; the conditions he proposed being that she should live the whole term of her natural life, and that a maintenance suitable to her high rank should be provided for her. The fact that this negotiation failed is not to be charged against Moray.

We now approach the close of our sketch, which must tell of the Regent's assassination. A party in the State was opposed to him, just because of the even-handed justice which he dealt out to all and sundry. And among those who were his bitterest enemies, the leaders of the Hamilton faction were pre-eminent.

After the battle of Langside, it became evident that, if Scotland was ever to reach a condition of peace and quiet, it was necessary that those who had lifted arms against the Regent, and other constituted authorities in the State, should be proceeded against as rebels. This was done with a firm yet merciful hand by the Regent. Among those whose lands were confiscated, and whose lives were placed in jeopardy for the part they took at Langside, was Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh—the future cowardly murderer of the Regent. The story of this man's crime is one that reflects little credit on the impartiality of some of our historians, Tytler's among the rest. And the genius of Scott has been dishonoured by throwing around Hamilton's name the glare of a false nobility, and pity called forth by fictitious wrongs. You all know the way in which the story is sometimes told. Hamilton's estates had been confiscated, for the reason already stated; among the rest, that of Woodhouselee, on the Esk, where his wife lived. The fiction is that the Regent ordered his servants to eject Hamilton's wife from the house on a cold night in the depth of winter; and that the poor woman, wandering half naked in the woods of the estate, became a raving lunatic. Then a fervid imagination paints Hamilton, stung to revenge by such wrongs perpetrated against his wife, hastening to Linlithgow and shooting down his enemy there. Now, will it be believed—and there is the most thorough evidence for what is to follow—that when the life of Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh was forfeited by his action at Langside, it was spared by the Regent, and spared at the intercession of John Knox, whom Hamilton's partisans never ceased to vilify? Will it be believed, still further, that the Regent had nothing to do with the injury done to Hamilton's wife at Woodhouselee? That property was given to Bellenden, the Justice-Clerk; and if his servants did not behave in a humane manner to the wife of Hamilton, it is contrary to all rules of truth and justice to

blame Moray for that, or to say that it gave Hamilton the slightest excuse for wreaking his vengeance on the Regent, who had so recently spared Hamilton's life. The assassination of the Regent Moray, at Linlithgow, was one of the meanest, most cowardly, most ungrateful, and most unpatriotic acts that history records; and those who defend it are—unconsciously, no doubt—defending what cannot bear the scrutiny of even an earth-born morality. Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh was but a wretched tool in the hands of an unpatriotic and unprincipled faction, who wished to put the Regent Moray out of the way, in order that they might bring back the old *régime* both in Church and State. There is something morally grand in the scene, after the miscreant had, in so cowardly a way, done the bloody deed, when the Regent's friends stood around him, lamenting that he should have spared one who had now proved his murderer. With his dying voice, Moray declared that no one could induce him to regret any good he had done in his lifetime, even the clemency he had shown to Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh.

It is impossible to crowd into a single lecture details which, although interesting, would fill a volume if all were fitly told. Suffice it then to say that the murder of the Regent filled the whole country with horror and alarm. That one who had done so much for his country in perilous times should have fallen so soon—for he was only thirty-eight years of age when the assassin's bullet pierced him—and fallen in such a manner, could not but be deeply deplored. If even the testimony of historians, who are in the main unfriendly to him, were gathered together, it would prove a noble eulogy. Tytler, who is by no means friendly to him, says: 'As to his personal intrepidity, his talent for State affairs, his military capacity, and the general purity of his private life, in a corrupt age and Court, there can be no difference of opinion.' Archbishop Spotswood says of him, that he 'ordered himself and his

family in such sort, that it did more resemble a church than a court. . . . Not a profane or lewd word was to be heard from any of his domestics. A chapter of the Bible was always read at table, after dinner and supper; and it was his custom, on such occasions, to require his chaplain, or some learned man present, to give his opinion upon the passage, for his own instruction and that of his family.' The Archbishop says further of him, that he was 'a man truly good, and worthy to be ranked among the best governors that this kingdom hath enjoyed, and therefore, to this day, honoured with the title of the Good Regent.' And as regards the testimonies of friends, and their lamentations over Moray, time would fail us even to enumerate them.

The Regent's body was taken to Edinburgh, and buried in St. Giles's Church. Knox preached, to an audience of three thousand people, the sermon on the occasion, from the text, 'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.' Buchanan wrote his epitaph, in a few words full of elegance, and expressive of sincere grief. Randolph, the English Ambassador, wrote a touching account of his funeral, in which the love of the friend blends with the pictorial power of the historian; and all good men lamented him.

Moray left behind him his wife and two daughters. Lady Margaret, the younger of the two, was married to Francis, ninth Earl of Errol; and Lady Elizabeth, the elder, was married to James, Lord Doun, better known afterwards as the 'Bonny Earl'—the earldom, after some opposition, going with the elder daughter of the Regent. That honour, with the still greater one of descent from him who made it so illustrious, is what the family at Donibristle can claim. For, let honours of a hereditary kind be ever so valuable, and we would not underrate them when kept in their own place, yet which one of us does not feel, with the life of the Regent Moray before us, that to be a lover of the truth, the companion of good men, the friend of

one's country, and the benefactor of fellow-men, is an honour far greater than any earl's coronet can bestow, and far more lasting? It is well that the nobility of our country should remember that the good alone are truly great. And should the time come when the nobility of Scotland shall turn their back on a true faith, a pure life, deeds of patriotism and acts of benevolence, outward honour may still be given them, but not the true heartfelt respect of Christian men. And for all of us, however humble the sphere may be which we occupy, the life of the Regent Moray has great and far-reaching lessons, telling us that what makes a man truly great is within the reach of all. A well-informed and well-regulated mind, a heart inspired by love to God and fellow-men, a life ennobled by purity and good deeds,—these are within the reach of the poorest, and the rich and outwardly great, without them, are poor indeed. Let these things be carefully pondered by the inhabitants of our village; and let them never fail to remember that, as when the civil liberty of our country was at stake, Robert Bruce found a noble coadjutor in Thomas Randolph, Lord of Aberdour; so, when the battle for a higher freedom had to be fought and won, John Knox found his ablest friend and supporter in James Stuart, Earl of Moray. Let such names and deeds become watchwords, and they will help to keep the fires of patriotism and religion ever burning.

9.6.1

LECTURE VII.

Birth, parentage, and education of the Regent Morton—State of the country—Power of the Douglases, and their traitorous connection with Henry of England—Wily character of Sir George Douglas—Escape of James the Fifth from Falkland, and virtual banishment of the Douglases—Their return on the King's death—The capture of a wife and an earldom by sapping and mining—The marriage an unhappy one—A Lord of the Congregation—His late developed powers—Becomes Lord High Chancellor—The part he acted in connection with Rizzio's murder—This tragedy a virtual revolution—His relation to the murder of Darnley—The Queen's relation to it—Bothwell's part in it—Disgraceful skirmishing between Morton and Kirkcaldy of Grange—Morton becomes Regent—Character of his government—Knox's warning—Charges brought against him, and his defence—Resigns the Regency—His residence at Aberdour—Is tempted to grasp power again—Is imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, then in Dumbarton Castle—Brought to trial, condemned, and beheaded.

In fulfilment of a promise made in my first lecture, I am now to lay before you a sketch of the life of the Regent Morton. There is perhaps no character of equal prominence in Scottish history, who has gathered around him fewer admirers than the subject of our sketch. The Regent Moray has his devoted admirers as well as his fierce detractors; but cold aversion and sullen dislike seem to be the all but universal feelings that close in around the grave of Morton. We certainly do not appear as the apologist either of the man or the politician, whose life and times we are to attempt to sketch in hurried outline. Of some of the features of his character, and some of the lines of his policy, we shall claim the right to speak in accents of undisguised scorn. But we venture to think we shall adduce evidence which will go to prove that some of his public actions have been exhibited in an unfair light, and

that the closing scenes especially of his eventful career have been concealed or distorted, even by some who profess to have weighed historical evidence with a steady hand. It can, of course, be only the leading events of such a lengthened and stirring career that can reasonably be expected to be compressed within the compass of a single lecture. And, to lighten the subject somewhat, we must occasionally turn our eyes away from the man, and mark the complexion of his times.

James Douglas, who afterwards became Earl of Morton and Regent of Scotland, was the second son of Sir George Douglas, the brother of Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus. There thus ran in his veins the blood of a family whose daring and intrepidity have passed into a proverb,—a family whose name, strangely enough, is connected in the earliest stages of its history with the mitre and the pastoral staff; but speedily linked itself, in a more enduring way, with the helmet and the lance; and is more or less associated with almost every great struggle in Scottish history. Powerful throughout almost their entire career, the family of Douglas had never so much influence as about the time when the subject of our sketch appeared on the scene. It has been a matter of considerable dispute in what year this scion of the house of Douglas was born. Nor should it be said that the question is of little moment. An important element is wanting, in following the career of a man of eminence, when we are at sea regarding his age. It helps us to form a juster estimate of his powers when we know at what period of life he appeared on the stage of public affairs, and at what age his career ended. We are happily able to settle the controversy regarding the year in which the future Regent was born. The information is to be found in a little-known letter from the pen of King James the Sixth, exempting Morton from further attendance on assemblies, conventions, and warlike concourses; and one of the reasons urged for his exemption is stated as follows:—

'As als be reassoun of his greit aige, being now past three scoir ane zeiris.' As the letter in which these words occur is dated March 1577, we may, with almost absolute certainty, conclude that Morton was born in the year 1516, three years after the fatal contest at Flodden.

At no period in the history of Scotland did the Douglases enjoy so much power as during the minority of James the Fifth, the son of the brave but infatuated King who fell at Flodden. The marriage of the Earl of Angus, the uncle of the subject of our sketch, with the widow of King James the Fourth, and sister of Henry the Eighth of England, gave the family of Douglas immense influence in Scotland, and formed a strong link between them and the English Court—a link that proved too strong for their fidelity to their sovereign and their devotion to their country. Henry readily adopted, and vigorously carried out, the policy, which his father had inaugurated, of keeping a number of well-paid spies in Scotland, who were, generally, the professed subjects of the Scottish King. Some of the Scottish nobility, to their shame be it said, did not hesitate to accept Henry's bribes; and none held out their hands more greedily for English gold than the Earl of Angus and Sir George Douglas—the father of the future Regent. After a great many moves and counter-moves on the political chess-board, it came about that the young King was virtually a puppet in the hands of the Douglases. Almost every office in the State came to be filled either by members of that family or their retainers; and the Earl of Angus was king in almost everything but the name. The young sovereign was too conscious of his ability, and too high-spirited, to continue as a puppet, or a prisoner, in the hands of a mere faction. And his skilfully-planned and cleverly-executed escape from Falkland Palace in the grey morning, when, with Jocky Hart his groom following him, he galloped to Stirling, when Douglas of Pathhead, the captain of the royal guard, thought him fast asleep,—this awoke the

Douglases to the discovery that the royal bird had escaped out of their net, and that their power was, for a time at least, at an end in Scotland. They who, only the day before, had wielded almost regal authority, discovered, ere the day signalised by that famous ride was over, that they durst not come within six miles of the Court, on pain of treason. And in a short time the chief members of the faction—Angus, Sir George Douglas, and his son James, now a lad of twelve—were fugitives in England.

Sir George was a man of considerable ability, but wily and tortuous to a remarkable degree. He possessed the unenviable tact of being able to persuade his neighbours that he was travelling eastwards, while all the time he was actually going westwards; and, like the crab, he had the power of reversing his movements without even seeming to turn round. The policy of the whole of the Douglases at this time, it must be confessed, was of the most unpatriotic character. Angus had actually sold himself to King Henry of England, engaging, as the original paper, still in existence, proves, 'to make unto Henry the oath of allegiance, to recognise him as supreme lord of Scotland, as his prince and sovereign.' This policy became disgracefully prevalent with the Scottish nobles in the time of James the Fifth; the temptation, as is well known, coming to them in the fascinating shape of English gold. Some of our Scottish nobles, no doubt, kept themselves free from such disgraceful proceedings; but, up to the time when Henry's death put an end to these intrigues, it may safely be said that, if the patriotism of the middle classes and the peasantry had not been firm and unyielding, Scotland would in all probability have become a mere province of England.

As the Douglases continued in England, from the time of their virtual banishment till the death of James the Fifth, in 1542, there can be no doubt that James Douglas was educated principally in England; and he spent his early years at the Court of Henry the Eighth. It is rarely the case

that we are favoured with the particulars of the education of men of that period, unless, indeed, they were destined for one of the learned professions, which we have no reason to believe was ever dreamt of in young Douglas's case. And thus it happens that almost the only item of information we have of the education of the future Regent, is that, in addition to the knowledge he derived from books, he had the advantage of travelling in foreign lands. Italy is specially mentioned as the scene of his wanderings; and it may be, to some extent, to this fact that we have to trace his early efforts to spread the cause of the Reformation in Scotland. The surest way to become acquainted with the malarious influence of Popery was to survey it at head-quarters. The visit of Luther to Rome was an important epoch in his history; and although the future Regent was, in all probability, more opposed to Popery on political than religious grounds, his visit to the seven-hilled city had, no doubt, its own influence in forming his views on the great struggle then going on throughout Europe.

On the return of the Douglases to Scotland, in 1542, Sir George, the acknowledged leader of the faction, began, in his own most approved fashion, to work for King Henry—with boldness when he might safely avow his intentions, but with great secrecy and cunning when concealment was necessary. And, in these artifices, James Douglas had the most thorough culture, under the hand of his accomplished father. The impatience of Henry, however, wrought the ruin of his own schemes. Not contented with trying to secure a matrimonial alliance, by the espousal of his son—afterwards Edward the Sixth—with the Princess Mary of Scotland, he openly declared himself Lord Paramount of Scotland, claimed the custody of the infant Princess as a matter of right, and found fault with the Douglases because they had not delivered the fortresses of Scotland up to him. When these claims were made known, they roused the indignation of every leal-hearted Scotchman; and called

into existence a national party, who resolved to defend the liberties of their country at all hazards. It would have awakened a still deeper feeling of indignation, had it been known that Sir George and his party actually engaged, in the event of greater treachery being impossible, to deliver up to Henry all the country south of the Forth. This was not the best education for the future statesman ; and, in judging of his career, it should never be forgotten that he was nursed and trained in the midst of a band of unprincipled Scotchmen, who, for selfish ends, had apostatised from the noble traditions of their country, inseparably linked with the names of Wallace and Bruce. In only one direction does the influence of Henry seem to have told for good on James Douglas. At the English Court he was inspired with right feelings in reference to Reformation principles. Henry's views were, no doubt, strongly tinged with selfishness ; and, while he had a hearty dislike to the rule of the Pope, he had no great disinclination to constitute himself a *quasi*-Pope in his own dominions. In spite of all this, however, it is undoubtedly to the freer air Douglas breathed at the English Court, that we are to trace the fact, that, in the early part of his career, he wrought almost as vigorously for the spread of the Reformation in Scotland, as he did for less worthy ends, sought after by English policy.

Among the first enterprises engaged in by James Douglas, on his return to Scotland, was the very important, although rather unwarlike one, of getting a wife. James, the third Earl of Morton, had three daughters, but no son to succeed to his title and estates. Of these daughters, Lady Margaret, the eldest, was married to the Earl of Arran, and Lady Beatrix, the next eldest, to Lord Maxwell. The youngest daughter, Lady Elizabeth, was still unmarried. How to win the hand of Lady Elizabeth, and, by marrying her, the youngest of the three daughters, to succeed to the title and estates of her father, seems to have been the somewhat difficult problem which James Douglas and his wily father, Sir

George, set themselves to solve; and it is creditable to their policy and perseverance, at least, that they succeeded. The story of their procedure has never, so far as I am aware, been told before. Let me narrate it as shortly as possible. No new light can, I fear, be cast on the story of the wooing; but this is perhaps little to be regretted, as it was probably less interesting as it actually took place, than as imagination can so easily paint it. But as regards the other part of the plan, and what, with all deference to the strength and purity of young Douglas's affection, we may venture to call the scarcely less important part—the acquisition of the title and estates—some rather interesting information can be given.

James the Fifth bore no great good-will to any of the Douglases; and indeed few, if any, of them gave him much reason to love them. The third Earl of Morton, who was married to Lady Katharine Stewart, a natural daughter of King James the Fourth, was no exception to the rule. And as the King, although he did not much like the Earl, had conceived a strong affection for his estates, he did not think it beneath his dignity to try to get them out of the Earl's hands. His mode of procedure was somewhat singular. He ordered the Earl to betake himself to the north of Scotland, and reside at Inverness during his sovereign's pleasure. For any one to be banished thus, from home and its comforts, to what was then so wild and inhospitable a region, was far from pleasant. But for the Earl, who was now advanced in years, lame, and the prey of divers diseases, to be exiled in this fashion, and that in the depth of winter, was little short of sentence of death being passed on him. No effort that he could make to get a relaxation of the King's decree was of any avail; and he set out despairingly on his journey northwards. When he had travelled as far as Brechin, the King, who was in the neighbourhood, sent a message to him, urging him to execute a deed of resignation of his earldom and lands, in the hands of Robert Douglas of Lochleven. This the Earl at first posi-

tively refused to do ; but, after tasting the bitterness of exile, he did execute such a deed, and was allowed to return home. The conveyance of the honours and property of the earldom to Robert Douglas was, however, merely a feint on the King's part, as evidence existed to show that he meant to keep the lion's share of the prey to himself. And the execution of the deed, on the Earl's part, was evidently the result of fear, and not the act of his own free will. All this shows how much the royal prerogative was sometimes abused in what some are pleased still to call 'the good old times.' The Earl had returned to his home, and was at leisure repenting what he had done in haste, in the matter of the resignation of his earldom and lands, when the future Regent and his father laid siege to Lady Elizabeth and the earldom—the former being thought not quite a perfect possession without the latter. The odds seemed greatly against them ; but what will brave men not attempt when ladies and earldoms are in the question? So when James Douglas was saying sweet things to Lady Elizabeth, Sir George and the Earl were, we may conclude, discussing secularities; and a paction was made between them, to the effect that, if Sir George procured the reduction of the infeftment of Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven, in the lordship of Morton, and laid down a sum of two thousand pounds—Scots money, of course,—the Earl would immediately 'cause' his daughter, Lady Elizabeth, to contract marriage with James Douglas, and, moreover, make the title and lands over to them in conjunct-infeftment. It would almost require a lecture by itself to tell what skill and determination were brought to bear on the difficult task ; and by what an amount of sapping and mining, and advancing from outer to inner parallels, Lady Elizabeth and the earldom were at length taken—for taken they both were. The deed of resignation was annulled ; Sir George's money, we may presume, was paid down ; and Lady Elizabeth was married to James Douglas. The problem was solved, and the

husband of the third daughter became, in course of time, the Earl of Morton.

Before turning to matters of a public kind, with which we have chiefly to concern ourselves in the sequel of this lecture, I may say that the marriage brought about in this particular fashion did not turn out a happy one for poor Lady Elizabeth. The glimpses we get of the domestic life she led in Tantallon Castle are few, but very sad. The whole of her children—and they were no fewer than ten—died in infancy, and she herself became insane. James Douglas did not prove a good husband.

In the early stages of the Reformation movement, the Earl of Morton—for such was the title of James Douglas after 1553—took a leading part. He was one of the original Lords of the Congregation in 1557; and in the following year he joined in a spirited remonstrance to the Queen-Dowager, against the barbarous murder of Walter Mill, for holding reforming views. It has been noticed, however, that for a considerable time Morton was very chary of taking a decided part against the Queen-Regent. One writer accounts for this on the supposition that he had received many substantial favours from her, and that he was always much moved by that particular kind of gratitude which consists in a lively apprehension of future favours. We are far from supposing that he did not largely share in that by no means uncommon virtue. But even this restraint was not likely to hold him long after this period, as the Queen-Regent was near the end of her career. It must be confessed, however, that Morton's character, even at this time, gave but little promise of his future eminence. From whatever cause it may have arisen, there was little of that promptness of decision, tenacity of purpose, and determined energy in bringing about what he had resolved on, that so highly distinguished him in his later career. In fact it was not till he was more than forty years of age that these characteristics appeared in any considerable degree.

Sir Ralph Sadler's description of him at this time, as 'a simple and fearful (timorous) man,' looks more like an ironical description of him than one to be taken in a literal sense. And yet the English Ambassador had ample opportunities of knowing him.

Let me now briefly sketch the leading incidents of Morton's public career, passing lightly over those that are better known, or on which I can throw no new light, and entering more into detail regarding scenes that are less generally known, or in connection with which investigation has brought new facts to light. Morton may be said to have passed from comparative obscurity to a position of commanding influence almost at a bound. In May 1559 we find him acting as one of the Commissioners for the settlement of affairs by the treaty of Upsettlington. In the following year, after the famous reforming Parliament, we see him associated with Maitland of Lethington and the Earl of Glencairn in a mission to England, to inform Queen Elizabeth of what had been done on that memorable occasion. It was not, however, till Queen Mary returned from France that he was in a position to show fully what his powers actually were. Immediately after her return, he was sworn one of the members of her Privy Council; and in 1563 he was raised to the exalted position of Lord High Chancellor. The qualifications he displayed in the lower offices he had filled must have been of no ordinary kind, to secure such rapid advancement to the very highest. How greatly to be deplored, then, is it, that the memory of such great, though late-developed powers, should bear the marks of blood, that never can be washed out! You are, of course, all familiar with the history of the murder of Rizzio, in its leading lines, at least. On no ground of law, either human or divine, can that act be justified. It is well, however, to bear in mind the exact circumstances in which the tragedy took place. David Rizzio was an Italian, who came to this country in the train of the Ambassador of Savoy, and

took service under Queen Mary as a player in her musical band. In course of time, however, he began to act as secretary to the Queen; and he seems to have risen into favour with her, very much in proportion as Darnley fell into disfavour. Nothing could have been more imprudent, on the part of the Queen, than to elevate such a man to the position of a counsellor. It had the worst effect on the foreigner himself. Flattered by the attention of the sovereign, he began to ape a style which put that of many of the nobility quite into the shade, and even aroused the jealousy of Darnley. The most influential of Scotland's nobles found it the easiest way to advance their suits at Court to make presents to the Italian fiddler; and it was believed that the Queen intended to raise him to the dignity of a peer of the realm. By many he was suspected of being an emissary of the Pope's; and there is good reason for believing that this surmise was a perfectly correct one. We may be quite sure that 'Signor Davie,' as he was called, being a foreigner and a Papist, was not the man to counsel the Queen wisely, in reference to the league, which is known in history as the 'Holy Union,' but which was, in fact, an unholy alliance, on the part of the Catholic powers, to quench the Protestant cause in blood. It was well known, at the time, that Rizzio had strongly urged the Queen not to extend her pardon to the banished Lords, at the head of whom was her own step-brother, the Earl of Moray. It is not so generally known, however, that the Italian musician was himself a man of dark and bloody designs, and that, when assassination fell to his lot, it was only what he had planned for others. It is related by Calderwood, one of the most trustworthy of our historians, that Rizzio advised the Queen to cut off some of her nobles, as a terror to the rest; and that a band of assassins came from Italy for this purpose—reaching this country by way of Flanders, to escape suspicion. Things were gradually assuming a most portentous aspect. The Parliament was about to meet, and it was

well known what the measures were, that the Queen, under the guidance of Signor Davie, was resolved to carry. The first was the forfeiture of the banished Lords; and the second was the restoration of Popery as the religion of the State, and the putting down of Protestantism with a high hand. It was in these circumstances that the plot against Rizzio was hatched. Parliament assembled on Thursday, the 4th of March 1566. The Statute of treason and forfeiture, against Moray and his companions in exile, was prepared; and on the following Tuesday the Act was to be passed. A nice bill of fare indeed, fitted to please the taste of emissaries of the Pope, and enemies of their country's freedom! But that Act, I need hardly tell you, was not passed; the Protestant religion was not put down; and Popery was not re-established. The event which arrested this whole catalogue of wicked and bloody acts was an act itself wicked and bloody, only in a less degree—the murder of Rizzio. It was Saturday evening, about seven o'clock, and night was closing in, when the Earl of Morton and Lord Lindsay, with a hundred and fifty men, bearing torches and weapons, marched into the court of the Palace of Holyrood, and seized the gates. The Queen was at supper in a little parlour which entered from her bedchamber. With her was a small company, consisting of the Countess of Argyle, a half-sister of the Queen's, who made a point of living separate from her husband, the Commendator of Holyrood; Beaton, the Master of her Household; Erskine, captain of the guard; and Rizzio. When the company was at supper, Darnley, ascending from the apartment below by a secret stair, entered the parlour, followed by Lord Ruthven, George Douglas, natural son of the Earl of Angus, and Ker of Faudonside. Rizzio was dragged into the adjoining apartment, amidst the cries of the Queen and her attendants, and there despatched with daggers. The other inmates of the Palace, hearing the affray, made an effort to reach the Queen's apartments; but Morton had his guards too well

posted to allow of any interference. And thus died David Rizzio. The mode of his death, and all its accompaniments, were barbarous; although it was but an instance of the plotter of the violent death of others meeting his own in a similar way. With whom lay the blame of it? There can be no doubt that the plot originated with Darnley. And there can be as little doubt that Morton was in Darnley's counsel, in as far as bringing Rizzio to punishment for his misdeeds was concerned; but his advice to Darnley was to bring the culprit to public trial, not doubting that sufficient evidence would be found for condemning him. This did not suit Darnley's views, and there can be no doubt that he got Morton to agree to a more summary mode of procedure—the design apparently being to hang Rizzio at the Cross. There is, however, no evidence to show that Morton sanctioned the brutality of poniarding Rizzio, almost in the presence of the Queen. In any fair view of the matter, however, it leaves a black stain on Morton's memory.

Hardly had the deed been done when Darnley denied that he had any share in planning the murder; and in a cowardly way he threw the whole blame of it on his accomplices. Morton and others implicated were thus compelled to flee the country, and seek refuge in England. The effects of the murder of Rizzio, politically considered, were little short of a revolution. The Popish plans of the Queen were laid aside. The banished Lords returned. Even the Earl of Moray once more took part in the government of the country. Mary, however, was only delaying some of her cherished plans, and quietly meditating revenge. Meanwhile the body of the Italian musician was buried beside those of royal rank in the chapel of Holyrood; and Joseph Rizzio, his brother, was advanced to the vacant post.

Through the interest of the Earl of Bothwell, Morton was so far pardoned as to be allowed to return to Scotland again; but he was forbidden to come within seven miles

of the Court. This, however, did not prevent him from meeting occasionally several of the nobles who enjoyed Court favour. While at Whittinghame Bothwell made him aware of the Queen's determination to put Darnley out of the way, and indirectly sought Morton's aid in the bloody enterprise. The answer to this solicitation was something very different from what we could have wished. Morton said he must first have the Queen's own handwriting on the subject, and then he would give an answer. If he had acted an honourable part, he would at once have scouted the very idea of such an unhallowed proceeding, by whomsoever proposed. He might have known that, if the Queen was engaged in such a wicked scheme, it was most unlikely that she would commit herself by giving her handwriting on the subject. In point of fact, she never did give Morton the warrant he sought. But the very fact that it was sought shows a mind not yet made up to have done with deeds of lawless bloodshed. This temporising policy of Morton, in connection with the project of murdering Darnley, was what, in the end, cost him his head. He had no active hand in that disgraceful affair; but he knew of the plot, and made no effort to frustrate the designs of the conspirators.

You know the history of that deed of blood. Darnley had deserted the Court, where he found himself of very slight consequence. He went to Glasgow, on a visit to his father, and while there was laid up with small-pox. The Queen went to visit him quite unexpectedly; and, if the contents of the celebrated 'silver casket' are to be received in evidence, as we unhesitatingly think they must, there can be no doubt that her unwomanly design was to draw him into the toils of his enemies. She induced him, in an early stage of convalescence, to accompany her to Edinburgh. At first Craigmillar was spoken of as a temporary residence; but afterwards a lodging at the Kirk of Field—near the site now occupied by the University—was

selected. There the Queen, who was one of the cleverest and most unscrupulous women of her time, made a pretence of reconciling him to Bothwell, who was at the moment deep in schemes for Darnley's assassination. A fitting occasion for carrying these schemes out had now arrived; and this, apparently, was all that was wanted. The Earl of Moray had been summoned to St. Andrews, where his wife lay seriously ill, so he was out of the way. The fitting time had come. Bothwell's minions had the gunpowder carefully placed where it was likely to do its work most effectively. The day chosen for the perpetration of the crime was Sabbath. The Queen had been in Darnley's lodging, at Kirk of Field, during the evening, and had been more lavish in tokens of affection than she had been for a long time. But she suddenly recollected that she had forgotten an important engagement. Sebastian, one of her foreign musicians, had that day been married at the Palace; and it troubled the Queen's conscience when she remembered that, Sabbath-day as it was, she had not kept her promise to dance at his wedding. This neglect of duty must be repaired. So she bids Darnley an affectionate 'good-bye,' whispering, at the same time, the remark that it was just about a year since Rizzio was murdered. This, no doubt, must have sounded strangely in the sick man's ears; but the Queen's farewell text was made very plain before morning. Bothwell was one of the party at the marriage of Sebastian and Margaret Carwood, and for a time he gaily took part in the festivities. But he quietly slipped out of the chamber to engage in work of a different kind. Changing his apparel, he hastened to the Kirk of Field, and saw that nothing was wanting to insure certainty and despatch in the deed of blood. Two hours after midnight the whole town was aroused by a fearful explosion, that seemed to shake every house to its foundation. The report came from the direction of the Kirk of Field, and thither the startled inhabitants eagerly rushed to ascer-

tain what had happened. The house in which Darnley lodged was blown to pieces, and his dead body, and that of his page, were found lying at a little distance from the ruins. Bothwell had hurried back to the Palace by a different route, and had scarcely time to retire to rest when the whole Palace was in an uproar. With well-dissembled surprise he inquired what was the cause of all the stir; and he did not forget to cry 'Treason!' when told of the explosion and the death of Darnley. Mary, too, seemed horror-stricken, and kept her chamber for the greater part of a day. She was, however, so far recovered from the shock she had received, and the grief attendant on it, as to be able, in less than a fortnight, to enjoy a game at archery with her husband's murderer; and three months afterwards she married him! Let the curtain drop on one of the most heartless and horrible crimes that ever stained the annals of Scotland.

The revolution which took place after Mary's marriage with Bothwell brought Morton back again into power. He was restored to the office of Lord High Chancellor, and made High Admiral of Scotland. And as a set-off against many instances of avarice recorded of him, it should not be forgotten that, when it became necessary to fit out a small fleet for the capture of Bothwell, who had turned pirate, and pursued that congenial calling among the northern isles, Morton supplied the needed means when the national treasury had run dry.

We must dismiss, in a few sentences, the notices of Morton which history gives us, from the period of Mary's abdication down till the time when he became Regent. The Earl of Moray during his regency found an able and faithful coadjutor in Morton; and when the 'Good Regent' fell by the assassin's hand, and the Earl of Lennox succeeded to the regency, Morton was in reality the head of the great Protestant party in the State. Indeed, throughout the whole time of the civil war that distracted the country,

till Mary's adherents were utterly vanquished, he held the most conspicuous place among the supporters of the boy King. In the daring attack on the Regent Lennox at Stirling, planned by Kirkcaldy of Grange, and carried out under the command of the Earl of Huntly, Morton was taken prisoner by the Laird of Buccleuch. But a number of the invading party found the shops of Stirling too tempting a prey; and the Earl of Mar, sallying forth from the Castle, turned the tide in favour of the captured nobles, although Lennox received his death-blow in the fray.

During the regency of the Earl of Mar, the skirmishing that went on between Morton and Kirkcaldy of Grange—the latter of whom held the Castle of Edinburgh in the Queen's interest—assumed a character that must be strongly reprobated. Take a single instance. Morton intended to give a grand banquet to a number of his friends at Dalkeith, on the occasion of the marriage of Lady Elizabeth Douglas to Lord Maxwell; and great stores of wine, venison, and other dainties were on their way from Perth for the occasion. Some bird of the air had whispered into Kirkcaldy's ear what was going on; and the question arose in his mind, whether it could not be so arranged that the feast might come off in Edinburgh Castle instead of Dalkeith. The thing seemed to him to be at least worthy of a trial. A party of horsemen was detached for the inglorious service; and Morton's venison and wine were made prisoners of war, without the slightest prospect of ever being released. This was indeed, without a figure, war to the knife, accompanied with a great shedding of claret. The Douglas blood was up at the affront, and a party was sent to burn Kirkcaldy's house of Grange, with all the stores of grain belonging to it. Kirkcaldy retaliated by burning the town of Dalkeith, and various other barbarous measures were resorted to on both sides to keep up the savage play. One has but to conceive of such proceedings taking place in the present day, to feel how much progress our country has made. It is not to be

forgotten, however, that intestine broils ever awaken the worst passions of a people.

On the death of the Earl of Mar, it was evident to the whole nation that there was but one man to whom they could look as his successor, and that was the Earl of Morton. In November 1572 he accordingly became Regent. He did not reach this high honour till he was in the fifty-sixth year of his age. Several reasons conspired to interpose delay. His connection with the murder of Rizzio, no doubt, lowered him in the eyes even of many who thought the Italian could well be spared in Scotland. A lawless proceeding such as that was not the best recommendation for the regency. In addition to this, many suspected Morton of having a hand in the assassination of Darnley—a suspicion which his own temporising policy, and his earlier connection with a deed of blood, almost compelled people to cherish. Then Lennox was the grandfather of the young King, and naturally stepped into the post of honour before Morton. It may fairly be questioned, however, whether he would not have been preferred to the regency on the death of Lennox, had not his own antecedents, and those of his family, been of a questionable kind, and still fresh in the memory of his countrymen. Not only did he reach the honour late, but during the time he held it—and it was for a period of eight years—it cannot be said that he commended himself strongly to his countrymen. We cannot, however, go the length some have done in condemnation of his rule. And, as will appear ere long, we must most emphatically condemn the severe judgments that have been passed on him in connection with the closing scenes of his life. One historian declares that he had 'all the faults, some of the talents, and none of the good qualities of the Regent Moray;' while another asserts that he was 'a venal judge, a cruel unrelenting soldier, a hypocrite in religion, and a profligate in private life;' and that it would be 'difficult to find a single virtue to relieve the

dark monotony of his vices.' This severe judgment is that of Patrick Fraser Tytler. We honestly believe it to be ungenerous, harsh, and not in keeping with well-authenticated facts. That many faults characterised Morton, both in his public and private life, is beyond a doubt—faults the tendency of which was to hinder the progress of law and order, as well as religion. But sweeping condemnations, like that which we have just quoted, are seldom just.

Let us glance at the more noticeable features of his regency. It gives one a greater interest in Morton's career, to know that, about the time when he was preferred to this place of honour and influence, he had two solemn warnings given him, which ought to have made him careful how he wielded such great power. The first of these warnings came from man, the Mentor being no less a personage than Knox; a man to whom Scotland owes a perpetual debt of gratitude, for the civil as well as the religious liberty bequeathed to her. The incident to which I refer comes to us with the stamp of the Regent's own authority impressed on it. When the Reformer was on his death-bed, Morton went to see him. And among the first questions put to him by the dying man was this, whether he knew anything beforehand of Darnley's projected murder. Morton denied any such knowledge of it. Whereupon Knox said to him, 'Well, God hath beautified you with many benefits, which He hath not given to every man as He hath given you: riches, wisdom, and friends; and now He is to prefer you to the government of this realm. And therefore, in the name of God, I charge you to use all these benefits aright, and better in times to come than you have done in times by-past; first to God's glory, to the furtherance of the Evangel, to the maintenance of the Kirk of God and His ministry; next for the weal of the King, his realm, and true subjects. If so you shall do, God shall bless and honour you; but if you do it not, God shall spoil you of these benefits, and your end shall be ignominy and shame.'

These were wise and solemn words for Morton to listen to from dying lips, when he was on the eve of attaining his highest earthly preferment.

The other warning came in the form of a dangerous illness, just when he was appointed to the regency. For several years he had been subject to attacks of sickness; but at this time many of his friends thought he was laid on a bed from which he would never rise again. We cannot affirm that any considerable impression was made on Morton by these events, either of which, by itself, would have tended to make a wise man better.

The first great effort of Morton, as Regent, was in conjunction with troops furnished by the Queen of England, to reduce the holders of Edinburgh Castle to subjection. This effort was made in a most determined way, and was crowned with complete success. The brave but infatuated Kirkcaldy of Grange not only despised a solemn warning, given him by Knox, but when an offer was made to him, through the English Ambassador, of a free pardon from Morton if he would only surrender, he scornfully rejected it, and, by the continuance of the siege, wantonly inflicted great suffering on the inhabitants of the city. The Castle was stormed, and its holders obliged to capitulate, and the brave soldier, Kirkcaldy, died an unsoldier-like death on the gibbet.

After this last stronghold of the Queen's faction had been subdued, Morton betook himself to the quelling of the Borders—always a turbulent part of the sovereign's dominions in the olden time. This being completed, the Regent set himself to the task of establishing order throughout the country generally. After a long period of civil broils, it might have been anticipated that there would be a good deal to do in this way. And what Morton undertook he did with a firm hand. But somehow he left the impression on the minds of many, that he had selfish ends in view in what he did. It was, generally speaking, his

peculiar mode of dealing out punishment, to make offenders suffer in purse rather than person; and men were not slack to say that this mode was preferred because it was more lucrative than any other. And yet he had a most ample fortune of his own, and had no need to apply State spoils to personal ends. In a letter to his relative, Douglas of Lochleven, which is to be found among the Morton Papers, he defends himself against the common complaint that he was avaricious, by saying that he refused to pay all and sundry out of the State coffers, according to their own estimate of the value of their services, and that, in this way, the outcry against him had arisen. But there was the evidence of systematic extortion and greed, in more spheres than one. Not only were estates confiscated, and the confiscation commuted into gold and silver, and fines imposed on all who ate butcher-meat in Lent, but the very benefices of the Church did not escape his hand. Bishops of a mild amiable type were appointed, who agreed to accept office on the condition of paying into the hands of the Regent, and other patrons, the chief portion of their emoluments. In addition to this, in many cases, three or four parishes were thrown into one, so that a single minister might do the whole work on one stipend, allowing the patrons to pocket the remainder; and in almost every instance in which this wretched plan was carried out, the spiritual interests of the people were uncared for. The injury done to the Church, in the matter of her temporalities, was, however, not the only wrong she suffered at the hands of the Regent Morton. He invaded her spiritual liberties to such an extent as to create feelings of the gravest anxiety in the minds of her best friends, and thus a strong reaction against the Regent was brought about. There were not wanting, too, instances of petty spite and cruelty in the administration of his government, which were altogether unworthy of one occupying the exalted position he held. In short, in hardly any respect

can the regency of the Earl of Morton be held up as worthy of imitation. The great mass of the people, and the ministers of religion, considered him an enemy of the Church; the nobles and landed proprietors cried out against his rapacity and tyranny; his personal friends charged him with avarice; and the young King, now twelve years old, began to be impatient of the restraint under which the Regent held him.

It was in the midst of such unpropitious circumstances as these that Morton resigned the regency, in the beginning of the year 1577. It is but fair that we should allow him to speak in his own defence at this juncture. The Laird of Lochleven was one of those personal friends to whom we have alluded as charging Morton with the crime of avarice. In reply to this charge Morton says, in a letter of date 4th March 1577, found among the printed papers of the family: 'As touching our offence to God, we mean not to excuse it, but to submit us to His mercy. For ambition, surely we think none can justly accuse us; for, in our private estate we could, and can, live as well contented as any of our degree in Scotland, without further aspiring. The bearing of the charge of the government of the realm, indeed, must lead us, or any other that shall occupy that place, not simply to respect ourself, but his Majesty's room, which we supply. And therein not transcending the bounds of measure, as we trust it shall not be found we have done, it ought not to be attributed to any ambition in us. For how soon as ever his Majesty shall think himself ready and able for his own government, none shall more willingly agree, and advance the same, nor I; since I think never to set my face against him, whose honour, safety, and preservation has been so dear unto me. Nor I will never believe to find otherwise, at his hand, than favour, although all the unfriends I have in the earth were about him to persuade him to the contrary.'[1] It is almost

[1] The spelling of the above extract has been modernised.

impossible to read these words, addressed to a private friend, without thinking that some of the charges preferred against Morton have been exaggerated. We would be far from defending him, in a single one of the crimes of which he has been proved guilty; but sometimes the tide of censure sets in so full and strong against a man, that it looks almost as if it had become fashionable to run him down. Even the demission of the regency is accounted for, by some historians, as an action done 'in the pet,' as if that were not a most unlikely way of explaining the action of such a brave, stern, lion-like man as Morton undoubtedly was. His resignation of the regency—the result, we have no doubt, of a careful estimate of the forces arrayed against him—was accepted, and a discharge, by the Privy Council, was granted him on the 12th of March 1577, which was followed by an obligation, on the part of the leading nobility, to ratify its terms. In this discharge the difficulties attending the government of the country, at the time Morton became Regent, are fully admitted. The success attending his efforts to bring the country into a state of peace and order is also acknowledged, as well as the great expenses he had personally incurred in some of these enterprises. And the Regent gets the solemn assurance, that for no alleged fault in his government, be it what it may, shall he be accused or condemned.

Soon after his resignation of the Regency, Morton retired for a time to his castle of Aberdour, where he spent his time chiefly in husbandry and gardening. It would have been well for him, turned of sixty as he now was, had he been contented with the seclusion of this retreat, whose harshest sounds were the song of the Dour, as it tripped along the base of the castle ramparts, and the ripple of the tide along the beautiful shore of the Whitesands Bay —a retreat around which nature had spread her fairest scenes; on either hand a winding shore, indented by innumerable bays; undulating fields and waving woods behind,

and the burnished Firth in front, leading the eye away to the blue Pentlands. But the experience of unlimited rule is, to some minds, like the taste of human blood to the tiger; it creates an irrepressible thirst for more. Morton's rest in his old baronial keep seemed only to minister to his desire for State occupation, and the luxury of feeling the reins of power in his hands again. In an evil hour he left this retreat, and speedily succeeded in grasping almost as much influence, in his private capacity, as he had ever possessed as Regent. Virtually the master of Stirling Castle, he was also, nearly to as great an extent, master of his youthful sovereign again; and in the exercise of his re-conquered power, he gave little indication of having learned to wield it with greater mercy or prudence. In his determined efforts to subdue the Hamilton faction, he wellnigh kindled anew the flames of civil war in the land. Into the details of these struggles we have not time to enter, nor indeed have we the desire. Tales of violence and blood have nothing attractive in them, and we envy not the mind that willingly lingers over them.

The time was now at hand when Morton was to discover, to his cost, that he had too highly rated the regard of his sovereign, too lightly estimated the power of his growing enemies, and too slightly considered the certainty with which evil deeds are followed by merited punishment, even in this world. A strange rumour had arisen, that he had determined to seize the person of the young King, and carry him off to Dalkeith. The origin of this rumour is probably to be found in the plots of Morton's enemies. The King gave some heed to it, however, or at least he pretended to do so. He had gone out on a hunting expedition, but all at once he interdicted the sport, and galloped back to Stirling Castle. Morton, when charged with the design, stoutly denied it, and courted inquiry. We strongly suspect that this was little better than a mere pretence, on the part of Morton's enemies, to get him within

their toils. The King ordered him to be at Stirling on the 4th of April. Tytler does not seem to have been aware of this fact, for he gravely informs us that fear was caused by the rumour that Morton was on his way to Stirling. When a man is summoned, by royal authority, to be at a given place on a given day, it should excite no surprise when it is reported that he is coming. The truth seems to be, that at this time Morton's death was what was eagerly sought by some of the hangers-on at Court, and Morton himself seems to have suspected something of the kind. Writing from Aberdour, on the 27th of March 1580, he tells his friend, the Laird of Lochleven, that the King had enjoined him to be at Stirling on the 4th of April. He assures the Laird, further, that he means to do all he can to induce the King and his Council to bring those to trial who had raised the rumour that he intended to surprise him and carry him off. He begs his friend to be at Stirling on that day, that he may have the benefit of his advice and concurrence. And he adds, 'If any such thing be alleged, you shall find me honest in thought, word, and deed, whenever that matter comes to trial.' That cloud blew past, but the shadows of a dark and stormy night were gathering around Morton.

There was at this time in King James's Court a favourite who was prepared to go any length in the way of accusing the ex-Regent. This was Captain James Stewart, a son of Lord Ochiltree. By him Morton was openly accused of having had a chief part in the conspiracy against Darnley's life; and he declared that he was ready to make the accusation good, on the Earl being brought to trial. Morton coolly replied that he feared no trial, and that, when he had proved his innocence, it would be for the King to decide what the punishment of those should be who had sent Stewart to accuse him. He was then imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, but soon afterwards was removed to the Castle of Dumbarton, which was under the charge of his great enemy, Lennox. And, in spite of all the efforts of

Queen Elizabeth and her ambassadors, it became most evident that his death had been resolved on as a stroke of State policy. Morton himself speedily became convinced that he had now got into the enemy's toils, and that he would not be allowed to escape with his life. And it is an instructive fact that, in the breathing-time granted him ere he was brought to trial, he betook himself to reading the Bible—a more profitable exercise than looking for aid to the earthly prince whose regard for him he had so much over-estimated. He began at the beginning of the old Book, and expressed the hope that he might be permitted to read the whole of it. But his enemies were in too great haste to permit of this, and he only reached the history of Samuel. One would like to know what the thoughts of the veteran warrior and statesman were as he turned over the leaves of the Inspired Record. The wish can fortunately be gratified, for he has himself told what he found in the time-honoured volume, which so many neglect in the day when all goes well outwardly, but which few can afford entirely to disregard in the day of calamity, or in prospect of death. 'I see there,' said this man of strife and bloodshed, about to engage in warfare of a sterner kind, 'I see there that the mercies of God are wonderful; and He always inclined to have pity on His own people of Israel. For therein it appeareth that howbeit He punished the people of Israel when they sinned, yet how soon they turned to Him, He was merciful to them; and when they sinned again, yet He punished them, and so oft as they repented, He was merciful again. And therefore I am assured, howbeit I have oft offended against my Lord God, yet He will be merciful to me also.'

When he was brought to Edinburgh and put to trial, the very complexion of the jury panneled in his case told him, and assured every intelligent eye-witness, that there was no chance of escape for him, whatever the evidence in his favour might be. So many of his open and bitter enemies

were among his judges, that, as he himself expressed it, 'it made little matter to them whether he were as innocent as St. Stephen, or as false as Judas.' A great many crimes were laid to his charge—according to one account, no fewer than nineteen,—but many of them were frivolous, and in the end, by the King's order, they were all departed from, with the exception of concealing the plot to murder Darnley. It must be regarded as an item in the proof of Morton's penitence, that he did not conceal the fact that he knew of the conspiracy formed against the unhappy Darnley. This admission was eagerly laid hold of by the assize, who brought in a verdict of guilty, as art and part in concealing the intended murder. Morton could not help expressing astonishment at such a verdict; denying as he did all art and part in the murder, of the knowledge of which he confessed concealment. He was sentenced to be beheaded, drawn, and quartered—which was commuted to simple decapitation. He retired to his quarters, where he supped and retired to rest, sleeping till three o'clock in the morning, when he rose and spent three or four hours in writing to the King. What he had written was taken to the King by some of the ministers who waited on Morton, but the boy sovereign refused even to look at what was sent him in such affecting circumstances. Calderwood says, 'He ranged up and down the floor of his chamber, clanking with his finger and his thowme.' And yet the King, whose boyish heart had so soon forgotten to pity, was he, regarding whom Morton had so lately written, 'Nor will I ever believe to find otherwise. at his hand, than favour, although all the unfriends I have in the earth were about him to persuade him to the contrary.'

During the solemn day that was ushered in in this unpromising manner, Morton opened his mind freely to Mr. John Durie and Mr. Walter Balcanquall, two of the ministers who attended him. He declared, sorrowfully, that all the

honours, riches, friends, pleasures, and whatsoever he had possessed in the world were but vanity. He made the most solemn asseveration that, although he knew of the intended murder of the King, he dared not reveal it. It was unnecessary for him to reveal it to the Queen, he said, for she it was who planned it; and he could not reveal it to Darnley himself, because he was so childish that he could conceal nothing from the Queen; and thus the mention of it might have cost Morton his life. He gave the most absolute denial to the charge that had been brought against him, in connection with the poisoning of the Earl of Athole, the conspiracy against Lennox, and the enterprise for seizing Stirling Castle and laying hold on the person of the youthful King. He declared that, if he had injured the interests of the Kirk, it was through lack of knowledge, and that he had of late resolved to amend some of his mistakes in that respect. He acknowledged many sins in private life, and thanked God, who, in the late troubles that had befallen him, had given him space to repent of his sins. He besought the ministers to continue with him, and lay before him such arguments as would keep his soul in view of God's mercy, and would tend to remove the natural fear of death. This shows how far from correct Tytler's statement is, that Morton, while exhibiting all the outwards marks of repentance, showed a calm contempt of death. The calmness we grant; but it is surely absurd to charge a man with contempt of death who seeks arguments to keep down the natural fear of it. And the facts, that the ministers who waited on Morton were solicited by himself to do so, and that they were asked to help him with such arguments as have been alluded to, effectually dispose of Hill Burton's statement that the ministers were there in the character of 'inquisitors,' and that they 'harassed' him with questions on points of conscience and conduct. There was one truth which, more than any other, seemed to comfort him within sight of the scaffold;

that, namely, which shows how, in point of justice, God will not, and cannot, exact the penalty from the believer which He has already exacted from his Great Substitute. When this was stated to him, he exclaimed, 'Truly, that is very good!'

In exercises such as these the morning and noon of his last day on earth were spent. Unexpectedly, however, the keeper of the prison appeared, and asked him to come to the scaffold. At this he seemed to be taken aback, and said, 'Seeing they have troubled me overmuch this day with worldly things, I supposed they should have given me this one night to have advised ripely with my God.' But the keeper replied, 'All things are ready now, my Lord, and I think they will not stay.' His reply was, 'I am ready also, I thank my God.' After prayer and a short address on the scaffold, in which he repeated, in substance, what has just been related, he bade good-bye to his friends, and assured his enemies of his pardon; and then met death with the mingled heroism of a Roman and the faith of a Christian. With his hands unbound, he laid his neck under the polished axe of the 'Maiden'—a species of guillotine. He then uttered the prayer, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! Into Thy hands, Lord, I commit my spirit! Lord Jesus, receive my soul!' And thus he prayed till the axe fell, and the quivering lips became silent in death.[1]

[1] In his Introduction to *The Epitaphs and Inscriptions in Greyfriars Churchyard*, David Laing has the following notice of the Regent Morton: 'The year before the death of Buchanan, James, Earl of Morton, was beheaded, on the second of June 1581, at the Cross of Edinburgh, by the axe of *The Maiden* (which he himself, it is commonly but erroneously said, caused make after the pattern which he had seen in Halifax, Yorkshire), which, falling upon his neck, put an end to his life. Hume of Godscroft adds, "His body was carried to the Tolbooth, and buried secretly in the night in the Grayfriars. His head was affixed on the gate of the city." It is creditable to the young King and the Lords of Privy Council, that, in the following year, a warrant was issued to take down the Earl's head. His head remained on the Tolbooth till 9th December 1582.'

Thus died the Regent Morton, in the sixty-fifth year of his age—never so great as at his death! A sense of desolation and dreariness comes over the heart as we think what, with his great powers, he might have been, had the views and feelings of his last days pervaded his whole career; and then reflect how very late they came—too late to make his influence for good much felt. For the sad truth is that not very many regard such instances of late repentance as sincere; and even those who would not venture to call such professions insincere, will still hold that a man's true influence takes its character from the unmistakable tenor of his life, rather than from statements uttered at the approach of death. Much to be envied, then, are they whose lives are every day, and all throughout, telling for good. And unhappy they whose avowed principles are never fairly seen in action, whose plans for good are all far away in the future, and whose professed religious views have no unmistakable influence on their lives—who only awake, like the Regent Morton, near life's close, to find their past career a grand mistake; or, what is perhaps a more common case still, never awake to a worthy conception of what life ought to be, till it has come to an end!

13. 6. 1

LECTURE VIII.

The history of the old Church of Aberdour resumed—Its earliest Protestant ministers—Mr. Peter Blackwood: his wide sphere of labour—The Readers and Exhorters—John Fairfull, Exhorter and father of an Archbishop—Mr. Andrew Kirk, Vicar—John Row, the historian, schoolmaster at Aberdour—Story of the conversion to Protestantism of his father, the Pope's Nuncio—Contest about a stipend—A member of the 'Angelical Assembly'—Mr. William Paton succeeded by Mr. Walter Stewart—Mr. Robert Bruce of Kincavil—Dalgety and Beath separated from Aberdour—Paganism of Beath—John Row and Colville of Blair befriend Beath—Mr. Robert Bruce's suspension—An exploit in pastoral visitation—Mr. William Cochrane, and Mr. William Smyth, assistants, and their stipends—Mr. Thomas Litster—Mr. Robert Johnstone—Notices of the public worship of the period—Communion seasons—Special collections made for various objects.

AFTER spending a considerable time on the history of the Monastery of Inchcolme, we now return to the old Church of Aberdour. Sir John Scot, one of the Canons of Inchcolme, was Vicar of Aberdour between the years 1474 and 1486—how much earlier or later I have no means of knowing; and then there is a period of upwards of seventy years, during which there is quite a dearth of information regarding the old church and its ministers. I have reason to believe that the Vicar's house stood near the site of 'The Cottage,' on the sea-shore, to the south of Seaside Street, occupied by Captain Bogle; and it is not improbable that the curious old *columbarium*, which was some time ago unearthed there, was the source whence the Vicar got the materials of which his pigeon-pies were made.

That blessed period for our country—the Reformation from Popery—at length arrived, and with it the old church of Aberdour comes again into view. I know not what I

would give for papers connected with that period, from which information might be gleaned regarding the means by which the Reformed cause was spread in this neighbourhood, and the circumstances in which the Reformed worship was set up. No information on these subjects can be got from the Session Records of the parish; for they go no further back than 1649—eighty-nine years after the period of the Reformation. Such notices, therefore, as I am able to lay before you of the old church and its ministers, during that long period, have been drawn from other sources.

It is stated, in the Records of the Kirk-Session of Beath, on the authority of Mr. William Scott, who was minister of Cupar during nearly the first half of the seventeenth century, that the first place where the Protestant Lords of Scotland met was the Kirk of Beath; and this confers great interest on a place which was virtually part of the parish of Aberdour till the year 1643.

The editor of the *Minutes of the Synod of Fife*, published by the Abbotsford Club, tells us that the first minister of our parish, after the Reformation, was Mr. John Ramsay, who, he says, was admitted in 1560 'to the kirks of Aberdour and Torrie.' But he has evidently mistaken our parish for Aberdour in Buchan; and Torrie is put in the place of Tyrie, in the same district.

The first Protestant minister of Aberdour of whom we have any sure information was Mr. Peter Blackwood. He had been a Canon-Regular of the Abbey of Holyrood; and seems to have been appointed in 1567, first of all, to Saline, having the parishes of Auchtertool, Dalgety, and Aberdour also in charge. He must thus have had a wide field to work in. About the year 1571 he removed to Aberdour, but he still had Saline and Dalgety under his care. No doubt he had, at various times, the assistance of *Readers*, among whom we find John Paterson, whose labours were confined to Aberdour and Dalgety, while Mr. John Fairfull and Mr. Walter Balcanquall do the work of *Exhorters*. The

Readers were a very valuable class of workers, raised up to meet the pressing wants of the time. Their office was to read the Scriptures to the people, few of whom were sufficiently educated to do this for themselves. And, in the case of a minister with so many congregations under his charge as Mr. Blackwood had, the services of the Reader would be much in request, and, on many occasions, the only ministrations of a public kind within the reach of the parishioners. Between the Readers and the regularly ordained ministers there was a class of men who, in addition to reading the Scriptures, were permitted to exhort the people, and on this account were called Exhorters. To this order belonged John Fairfull and Walter Balcanquall, to whom I have just referred. In all likelihood the latter is the same person who, a few years after this, appears as one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and whose son was successively Dean of Rochester and Dean of Durham. A curious paper has fallen into my hands, from which it appears that John Tyrie, younger—a son of John Tyrie of Bridgend, Aberdour, Chamberlain of the Abbacy of St Colme's Inch —was Reader in Dalgety in 1582. The paper is a receipt for stipend, and runs as follows :—'I Peter Blacwod, minister of God's worde at Aberdo^r^ grantis me to have ressaveitt fra Iohne Tyrie of y^e^ Brigend, Chalmerlane of y^e^ Abbacie of Sanctcolmisinche, the sume of twentie fyve ponds mony, for y^e^ Mertimess terme, for my stipend of y^e^ four score ane zeir, and uther twentie fyve ponds for y^e^ quhitsonday terme of y^e^ four score two zeirs, in compleitt payment of my haill zeir's stipend of y^e^ forsaid two termis qhereof I hold me weill content, satisfeitt and payitt, and of all uther zeirs and termis precedyng y^e^ deitt of y^e^ two termis abufe specifeitt: Be yis my acqwittance wreittin and subscryvit w^t^ my hand, at Dunibirsill, y^e^ twentie fyft daye of November foure score two zeiris, Before yir witness, Iohne Tyrie, younger, Reder in Dalgatie, Iohne Wemys in Aberdo^r^ Ihone Stevin servand me lord of Dun [Doune].

Peter Blacwod.' This acknowledgment is remarkably well written and expressed, notwithstanding its antique and variable spelling, and it conveys no mean idea of Mr. Blackwood's scholarship. Mr. Blackwood's salary, for the parishes of Aberdour, Dalgety, and Saline, was £128, 8s. 11d.; and John Paterson, the Reader at Aberdour, received £10 annually.

According to the editor of the *Minutes of the Synod of Fife*, Mr. Blackwood was translated to Aberdeen in 1586. He probably found himself inadequate to the labour and responsibility entailed on him by the charge of so many parishes. It is lamentable to mark the spiritual destitution which appears in these notices—one minister having the charge of as many as four or five parishes. Much of this destitution was no doubt due to the want of properly equipped men; but undoubtedly a good deal of it is traceable to the mean, avaricious measures of the heritors and Parliament of the time; and if one man may be singled out as a greater adept than others, at this time, in the line of policy which brought about this sad state of matters, we may name the Regent Morton. The system bore very bitter fruit in Aberdour and its immediate neighbourhood, as we shall have occasion by and by to show.

John Fairfull, whom we have seen acting as Exhorter, was a student of St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews. After acting as an Exhorter at Aberdour and Dalgety, we find him engaged as a schoolmaster in Dunfermline in 1584. Some years later he was presented to the Vicarage of Dalgety and Beath, and in 1598 he was translated to Dunfermline. He appears to have been a man of considerable culture, having been appointed, by the Assembly of 1601, a minister for the Royal household; and a few years later he received from the King the mastership of the grammar-school of Culross. The first of these appointments, however, did not take effect; and, whatever his services at

Culross may have been, he continued minister at Dunfermline. In 1609 Mr. Fairfull was brought into trouble through the high-handed policy of the Chancellor, Seaton, whose home at that time was at Dalgety. The Chancellor accused him of the grave crime of praying for the ministers who had been banished in 1606 for opposing the Royal will in Church matters. For this, and other similar offences, Mr. Fairfull was ordered by the King to repair to Dundee, and continue there during his Majesty's pleasure. He was not allowed to return to Dunfermline, but became minister of Anstruther, where he died in 1626, in the eightieth year of his age. It is a fact of some interest to us that the son of this former Exhorter at Aberdour was the somewhat notorious Andrew Fairfull, Archbishop of Glasgow during the early part of the Persecuting Times. Before reaching that position he had been successively minister at Leith and Dunse; and he is credited by Wodrow, on what seems indubitable evidence, with being the real author of the tyrannical Act of Privy Council in 1662, by which so many ministers were banished from their charges and their homes, because they would not seek collation from the bishops.

The parish of Carnock got a minister of its own in 1586, Saline in 1587, and Auchtertool some time before 1604; but Aberdour, Dalgety, and Beath continued united till 1643.

I have said that Mr. Blackwood was translated to Aberdeen in 1586. He was succeeded by Mr. Andrew Kirk, who was appointed to the Vicarage of the parish in 1587; for in those old days, and as often as Episcopacy raised its head in the Church, the distinction between Parsonage and Vicarage dues was to some extent observed. Mr. Kirk was a graduate of St. Andrews University, and had been a Reader at Muckhart from 1567 till 1586. After labouring in a similar capacity at Aberdour and Dalgety, he was, in 1588, presented to the parish of Fossoway, then within the bounds of the Presbytery of Stirling; but on examination it

was discovered that his theological attainments were so deficient that the brethren declared him, to use the words of their Minute, 'not meit thane to be admitted, in respect of the invaliditie of his doctrine.' Thus debarred from the work of the ministry at Fossoway, we find him ere long presented to the parish of Glendevon; and it would seem either that his doctrine had by this time acquired more robustness, or that extraneous influence had been brought into play to secure his settlement, for he became minister of Glendevon, and, after labouring for about forty years there, was succeeded in the charge by his son Andrew, who also was a graduate of the University of St. Andrews.

There was, about this time, a very remarkable man resident in Aberdour, who claims some notice at our hands. All who have made themselves familiarly acquainted with the process of events in Scotland, subsequent to the Reformation from Popery, have heard of John Row's *History of the Kirk of Scotland.* The author of that work was schoolmaster at Aberdour for a period of two years, and during that time he was also tutor to William, the second Earl of Morton, of the house of Lochleven, who was then a mere boy. As Row became a man of great eminence, on account of his piety as well as his learning, and as his connection with Aberdour is one of the most interesting of the historical associations belonging to the place at the time with which we are dealing, I shall be expected to dwell on it for a little. But, first of all, I must tell you something of his parentage. His father, who drew his name from the estate of Row, which lies between Bridge of Allan and Doune, was a man of considerable distinction. Receiving his early education at the grammar-school of Stirling, he became a student of St. Leonard's College, St. Andrews, and took his degree of Master of Arts from that University. He became such a proficient in the knowledge of Canon Law that he was sent to Rome prior to the time of the Reformation, as agent of the clergy in Scotland, and when the events which

heralded that great movement were heard of at Rome, he was sent back to Scotland, as the Pope's Nuncio, to inquire into the causes which had led to it. This investigation opened his eyes to the great importance of the questions at issue; and he speedily became a decided Reformer, working vigorously along with Knox and others to consolidate the emancipated Church.

The immediate cause of Dr. Row's conversion to Protestantism was a very remarkable one; and it may lighten a lecture in which there are a good many dry facts and dates, if I relate it to you in as few words as possible.

At the time we speak of there was, in the parish of Inveresk, a chapel dedicated to 'Our Lady of Loretto,' generally called St. Alareit. This chapel was one of the most celebrated shrines of superstition in Scotland. James the Fifth on one occasion made a pilgrimage to it from Stirling, walking all the way; and great was the concourse of people of all ranks who usually flocked to it; for the image of the Virgin, which had been brought from Loretto by Thomas the Hermit, was believed to possess miraculous powers.

> That Hermeit of Laureit,
> He put the common pepill in beleif,
> That blind gat sicht, and cruikit gat their feet.

When Reformation light began to shine, the ecclesiastics, fearing that old Mother Church was about to be deserted, resolved to do something fitted to confirm the wavering faith of their flocks, and, with considerable daring, proclaimed their intention of openly working a miracle, in order to put doubt to silence. A praiseworthy resolution, and an argument that ought to be convincing, should the reality of the miracle only prove beyond the reach of opposing evidence! They did not start at their shadow, these old churchmen; so they made proclamation at the Cross of Edinburgh that, on a given day, they would bestow sight on a blind man, who had for some time gone

about the district begging, and so was well known. And they invited all and sundry to come to the chapel of Loretto, and see the miracle with their own eyes, and be convinced. The day arrived, and with it an immense multitude anxious to witness the promised wonder. A scaffold had been erected, and a young man, who walked with hesitating steps, was led on to it. Every beholder saw that the poor man's eyes had all the appearance of blindness; many recognised him as the blind beggar, who for some years had been led about the country; and, after a few ceremonies were gone through, all saw that the appearance of his eyes was entirely changed. In addition to this, the whole multitude saw him walking across the scaffold, and down the steps to the ground as unerringly as they themselves could. And as he went, he lifted up his voice, and praised God, and St. Mary, and St. Alareit, and all the saints, priests, and friars, who had so wonderfully given him sight. All this was to the unsuspicious so convincing and affecting that the people's hearts were melted, and their purses opened, and a great many followed the man and gave him money. There was a Fife laird among the crowd that day, who had a clear head as well as a warm heart and a full purse. This was Robert Colville of Cleish, Cleish being counted a part of Fife in those days. He too followed the man, and gave him money; for he, as well as the others, had seen the wonderful cure, with this difference, that he did not believe in its genuineness. By repeated gifts of money the man was lured into his benefactor's lodgings; and no sooner was he there than Colville changed his tactics. Having bolted the door of the apartment, he told his recently acquired friend that he believed him to be a thorough impostor; and, drawing his sword, threatened to cut his guest's head off if he did not tell the whole truth regarding this pretended miracle. Thus forewarned, the man made a virtue of necessity, declaring that, when a shepherd-boy in the service of the Augustinian nuns of the

Sciennes, near Edinburgh, he had learned the art of turning up his eyeballs so as to appear blind, and that the friars, hearing of this wonderful gift, and thinking to turn it to their own advantage, kept him in hiding for a time. By and by they sent him out to travel the district around Edinburgh as a blind beggar; and, eventually, they pretended to work their miracle of healing on him at the chapel of Loretto. All this he was induced by Colville openly to declare at the Cross of Edinburgh; and when this was done, the two galloped off to Queensferry, and, crossing the Firth there, reached Cleish in safety. Dr. Row was at the time on a visit at Cleish, and heard from the young man's lips the whole story of the pretended miracle; and the narration accomplished at Cleish what the friars had only pretended to do at Inveresk,—for it really opened the eyes of Dr. Row to see that Popery was a delusion. Breaking with Rome, he became a minister of the Reformed Church, labouring first at Kennoway, where he married Margaret Bethune, daughter of the laird of Balfour; and afterwards at Perth, where he greatly helped to advance the good cause.

John Row, the historian, was the third son of this erewhile Nuncio of the Pope's. He had the benefit of an excellent education, and was a very precocious scholar. As he advanced towards manhood, he became tutor to the children of his uncle, Bethune of Balfour; and after a course of study at the University of Edinburgh, he became tutor to William, Earl of Morton, then a mere boy, as I have already mentioned; and at the same time he acted as schoolmaster at Aberdour. The young Earl's widowed mother being now married to Lord Spynie, to whom Row was related through his mother, we may suppose that his position at Aberdour Castle was one that secured for him a large measure of respect as well as comfort. He was at this time twenty-two years of age, and, being on the public exercise at Dunfermline, usually preached in the afternoon.

So, without doubt, the walls of our old church have often echoed his voice. However comfortable his quarters at Aberdour were, and however honourably, as well as usefully, he was employed in directing the studies of the youthful Earl, and teaching the children of the villagers, it appears that he began to weary of the pomp and pageantry of the Castle. For, from various sources we learn that at this time, and during the whole of Earl William's period, there was, within the walls of what is now a neglected ruin, all the life and bustle, the festivity and gaiety, of a Court. This did not suit the taste of one who would rather have had the learned leisure of a country minister's life, than hanging on at levees and dancing attendance on the great. Accordingly, you will not be astonished to hear that, the little kirk of Carnock falling vacant, and he receiving the appointment, he accepted it, and bade adieu to the Castle and school of Aberdour at the close of the year 1592.

John Row was, however, a frequent visitor at Aberdour after this date; and in the following year he was laid up for eighteen weeks with a tertian fever while residing in his old quarters. A singular incident occurred during that time. The fabric of the kirk at Carnock, we are told, 'wes in an evill condition, being theiked with heather, haveing no seates, verie dark, and wanting lights.' And 'in the time of his vehement disease'—at Aberdour—'it fell out that, upon a Sabbath day, about 11 houres, when the people wold have been in the kirk, if he had been able to preach, the roofe of the kirk brak and fell down, whilk doubtless wold have killed some and hurt many, if the people had been in the kirke.'

But we must leave John Row for a little, to carry on our account of the old church of Aberdour and its ministers. Mr. Andrew Kirk was translated to Glendevon in 1591, and we fall on no traces of a successor till 1602, when Patrick Carmichael is translated from Soutra to fill Mr. Kirk's place. He petitioned the General Assembly of that

year, complaining that Mr. William Paton, who was then minister of Dalgety, had the whole stipend belonging to that parish, and the parish of Aberdour as well, and asking that half of the stipend belonging to the two parishes should be given to him, the petitioner, as 'plantit minister at the kirk of Aberdour.' But to this course Mr. William Paton urged some technical objections which could not be easily set aside, and manifested a strong desire to pocket the whole stipend, while only doing half the work, and that very imperfectly; and so Mr. Carmichael had to be satisfied with the Vicarage dues. Notwithstanding this unfavourable decision, he laboured on in the parish till 1610, when he was translated to Oxnam, in Roxburghshire.

I am sorry that I have been unable to discover any more important facts than these regarding the ministry of Mr. Patrick Carmichael; but I regret still more that I have found so much recorded of Mr. William Paton's doings during his incumbency, for much that I have found does not redound to his credit. My authority for what I am about to tell you regarding Mr. Paton is John Row, the historian. I must premise, however, that Mr. Paton was minister of Makerston, and afterwards of Orwell, before being appointed to Dalgety, with the ministerial oversight of Aberdour and Beath.

Presbyterianism having ere this been established in our country, and the King having by a solemn oath bound himself to maintain it, you do not need to be told how, at the period when Paton lived, every artifice that kingcraft could devise was used to take her liberty from the Church. Unlawful Acts were passed by the Parliament, and, by means of bribery, suicidal resolutions were secured in the General Assembly. Perhaps no Assembly of the Scottish Church has such infamy connected with its enactments as that of 1610. Instructions—perhaps I should say orders—were given by State officials to each Presbytery, naming the representatives who were to be sent to the Assembly; and

when the members had convened, the Earl of Dunbar distributed so much money, in coins known by the name of 'Angels,' among those who were ascertained to be willing instruments in carrying out the policy of the Court, that this was long ironically called 'the Angelical Assembly.' Of this Assembly Mr. Paton was a member, and Mr. John Row broadly asserts that the minister of Dalgety got fifty weighty arguments, in the shape of marks, from the Earl of Dunbar, which convinced him that it was his duty to vote away the liberty of the Church. It would seem, however, that he did not derive much benefit from this ill-gotten gain, for the elders of the Kirk-Session missed fifty marks, or thereby, belonging to the kirk-box, which stood in the manse, and when they urged him to make some effort to discover the culprit, he refused to do so. A complaint was thereupon made to the Bishop, who made a visitation of the kirk, and ordered Mr. Paton to replace the lost money, seeing it was taken from the box while it stood in his house, and he had made no effort to discover the offender. Let us not dwell longer on this disagreeable story, but leave it with the expression of a wish that so it may always happen in the case of those who accept bribes of any sort, by whomsoever given!

Mr. Paton removed to Aberdour about the year 1614, having still, however, the spiritual oversight of Dalgety and Beath. His influence cannot have been of an elevating kind, seeing Mr. John Row says of him, that his 'skill and dexteritie was knowen to be far greater in making of skulls [a kind of coarse basket], nor either in praying or preaching.' This unsavoury reputation of Mr. Paton throws considerable light on a transaction which I must now notice. When John Row had been minister of Carnock for about twenty-four years a great effort was made by his old friends, the Earl of Morton and the parishioners of Aberdour, to have him translated to the latter parish. No doubt Mr. Paton was still alive, but it was proposed that he should go

to Carnock; and to this arrangement he consented, on the characteristic condition that his stipend at Carnock should be made as good as the one he was to leave behind at Aberdour. There was even an Act of the Synod of Fife procured for Mr. Row's translation. 'But,' as his son, Mr. William Row, minister of Ceres, tells us, 'when he saw the Act appointing him to be minister of Aberdoure, Dalgetie, and Beath, he could not be induced, by all their persuasions and arguments, to take on the burden of three kirks, alledging that one small charge wes too weightie for him; so that purpose failed.'

Mr. Paton died in 1634, his death being caused by a fall; and he was succeeded the following year by Mr. Walter Stewart, who was translated from Rousay and Egilshay, in Orkney, on a presentation by Charles the First. He continued for a very short time minister of Aberdour, having been translated to South Ronaldshay and Burray in 1636.

In the following year Mr. Robert Bruce was presented by Charles the First to the vacant charge,—still consisting of Aberdour, Dalgety, and Beath. He seems to have belonged to a collateral branch of the Bruces of Airth, and was, I believe, the son of Sir John Bruce of Kincavil. In some papers which I have had the opportunity of examining in the Sheriff-Court room at Cupar, he is not only designated 'of Kincavil'—a property in Linlithgowshire that once belonged to Sir Patrick Hamilton, the father of Patrick Hamilton the martyr,—but it appears that he was proprietor of Pitkeny, Mitchelston, a part of Strathore, and various tenements in the town of Dysart. But it is with the public life of Mr. Bruce that we have chiefly to concern ourselves. The Session Record of the parish gives us no notice of the first twelve years of his ministry; but from other sources we glean what is sufficient to convince us that, in spite of his name, Mr. Robert Bruce was a weak, although, in all probability, a well-meaning man. He had a peculiar facility in turning his coat. When first admitted

minister at Aberdour he was an Episcopalian. In 1638 he took his stand with the Covenanters, and for a time his public actings indicated sympathy with the side he had espoused. But when suffering for the sake of principle loomed in the distance, he gradually separated himself from the Covenanting party, and in 1662 he went back to the ranks he had left in 1638, his guiding principle, apparently, being that of the Vicar of Bray,—to stick to his benefice. A consistent man is ever to be respected, whatever his opinions on ecclesiastical matters may be; but when one makes a profession of attachment to a set of principles, and then, at the call of self-interest, runs to the opposite extreme, only those who are like-minded can applaud, or even defend him. Mr. Bruce was appointed Elimosinar, or Almoner, to the King in 1646, and was married to a sister of John Watson of Dunnikier.

It was during the time of Mr. Bruce's ministry that the important step was taken of erecting Dalgety and Beath into separate parishes. Hitherto they had, in the main, been dependent on the minister of Aberdour for the supply of ordinances. The result of such a state of matters might easily have been foreseen, and, better still, might have been avoided. And then we should have been saved the shame of that notice in the *Minutes of the Synod of Fife*, which leaves a deep stain on the early history of the neighbourhood. It is of date April 9th, 1641, and runs as follows:—

'*Recommend to Parliament the parish of Aberdour.*—The deplorable estate of a great multitude of people, living in the mids of such a Reformed shyre as verie paganes, because of the want of the benefit of the Word, there being three kirkis far distant, under the cure of ane minister, to wit: Aberdour, Dagetie, and Beath; the remeid whereof the Synod humblie and earnestlie recommendis to the Parliament.'

As the Records of our Kirk-Session do not extend so far

back as this, I cannot say precisely how far the statements contained in this Minute directly apply to the state of morality in our village. But eight years after this I find the mill of Aberdour going, and young women playing at games in the fields, on Sabbath, and many nameless proofs of great corruption of manners. It is difficult to form a correct view of the state of matters in the parish of Dalgety; but, as there had been no preaching of the Word there for several years before this time, it is not likely that the cause of morality stood any higher there. As Aberdour, Dalgety, and Beath formed virtually one parish at this time, we must, in fairness, regard the censure, in the Minute which I have quoted, as, in substance, applicable to all of them. But it is natural to think that manners would become more corrupt where there was no preaching of the Word; and this was the case at Beath as well as Dalgety. It so happens that we have information of a very definite kind, in reference to Beath, prefixed to the Session Record of that parish. After stating that Beath was one of the most ancient parishes of Scotland, and noticing the meeting of the Protestant Lords there—to which I have lately referred—the narrative tells us how terribly the parish had suffered from the want of religious ordinances. Nothing could be more simple and touching than the words employed to describe its actual condition.

'This kirk,' it says, 'in some sort myght be compared to Gideon's fleece, which was dry when all the earth was watered. When all the congregations of Fife were planted, this poor kirk was neglected and overlooked, and lay desolate then fourteen yeares, after the Reformation eighty years—the poore parochiners being always like wandering sheep without a sheephard. And whereas they should have conveined to hear a pastoure preiche, the principall cause of the people's meetinge wes to hear a pyper play, upon the Lord's daye, which was the day of their profane mirth, not being in the workes of thair call-

ing. Which was the cause that Sathan had a most fair name amongst them, stirring many of them up to dancing, playing at foot-ball, and excessive drinking, falling out and wounding one another, which wes the exercise of the younger sort; and the older sort played at gems [games], and the workis of thair calling, without any distinction of the weeke day from the day of the Lord. And thus they continued, as said is, the space of eighty years; this poor kirk, being always neglected, became a sheepe-hous in the night.'

The narrative then goes on to say that the Earl of Moray—the reference being to Alexander, sixth Earl, who was a great Royalist—and his mother-in-law, the Countess of Home, having both refused to aid in the building of a church, Mr. Alexander Colville of Blair became the friend of the neglected parishioners: 'having no relation to doe for this poore people, but being only their neere neighbour, and beholding from his own window thair pyping and dancing, revelling and deboshing, their drinking and excesse, thair ryote everie Saboth-day, was moved by the Lord and mightilie stirred up to do something for that poore people.' All honour to Alexander Colville!

The church was speedily built, and our old friend, John Row, from Carnock, after some hesitation connected with getting the consent of the minister of Aberdour, presided at the opening of it. I have made a vain search among the Acts of the Scottish Parliament for a notice of the decision come to, regarding the recommendation of the Synod of Fife. But, curiously enough, what cannot be found there is recorded in the Session Record of Carnock. Under date January 29th, 1643, there is a Minute informing us that Mr. Row made an explanation to his Session, that the reason why he had been so long absent from them was that the Presbytery had appointed him to go to Edinburgh, and attend the meetings of the Committee of Parliament, to whom the state of Aberdour had been referred. He tells

them, further, that he attended this Committee many days and diets; and that, in the end, the Lords of the Committee disjoined the three parishes, and a decreet to that effect was given. This decreet, he further says, was extracted by Mr. Alexander Colville for the church of Beath, 'quhilk he had laitlie biggit fra the cald ground;' and by the lairds of Fordell and Leuchat—John Henderson and Alexander Spittal—for the church of Dalgety, 'quha were bissey to get this turn done.' The decreet was entered in the Presbytery Record on February 1st, 1643.

There is another Minute, of date February 19th, 1643, which tells us that Mr. Row had preached a few days before at Dalgety, 'quhair there had been no preaching many years before.' From all this it is evident that Mr. Bruce had neglected the church of Dalgety, as well as that of Beath; although, it may be, not to the same extent. It was of course impossible for one minister to attend to the wants of three parishes; but it would have been better had Mr. Bruce acted as John Row did, when he declined to undertake the pastoral charge of three congregations. It may interest you to be told that Beath, having got a church, speedily got a minister—Mr. Harry Smyth. Mr. Harry was a graduate of St. Andrews. He had laboured for a time in Ireland, and then had been settled in the second charge at Culross; and now that he had accepted a presentation to Beath, a considerable time elapsed ere he got a fixed stipend. Mr. Robert Bruce of Aberdour took special care not to surrender any of the emoluments, connected with the pastoral charge of Beath, which he could claim on parchment authority. For he got the Estates of Parliament in 1646 to ratify, approve, and confirm the letters of presentation granted by the King to him, in 1637, bearing that he was lawfully provided, during his lifetime, to the ministry of the kirks of Aberdour, Dalgety, and Beath, and to the 'constant stipend, teinds, fruits, rents, emoluments, and duties thereof, with the

manses and gleibs of the samen.' Mr. Robert, it thus appears, was determined to keep the pay, although he did not do the work. For a considerable time the congregations in the neighbourhood contributed to Mr. Harry Smyth's support; and when at length he got a fixed stipend, it did not come out of the pockets of the landed proprietors of the parish. A contribution was made throughout the bounds of the Synod of Fife; the Presbytery of St. Andrews giving £400, the Presbytery of Cupar £250, the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy £300, and the Presbytery of Dunfermline £250. And, in 1650, this sum of £1200 was mortified to procure an annual stipend for the minister of Beath. These details are so closely related to the subject of our investigations, and the present parochial arrangements of our neighbourhood, that to have passed them by would have been unpardonable.

Mr. John Row of Carnock has been so much mixed up with the history of our parish, in those old days, that I cannot part from him without telling you that, on account of his firm adherence to Presbyterian principles, he fell under the displeasure of Archbishop Spotswood, and was strictly confined to his parish—a common mode of punishment awarded to faithful ministers at that time. Intercession was made to the Archbishop for a relaxation of this severity, and at first failed; but at this stage, Row's old pupil, the Earl of Morton, proved himself a benefactor, and procured for the aged minister permission to leave his parish. Acting on this permission, he once and again visited Aberdour; but he was not allowed to preach there. A curious incident is related of this Archbishop, which illustrates the kind of arguments that told powerfully on him. When John Row had fallen under his displeasure, a deputation, consisting of the historian's son, John—then schoolmaster at Kirkcaldy, and afterwards Principal of King's College, Aberdeen—William Rig of Athernie, and Richard Chrystie, a servant of Sir George Bruce's of Carnock, waited

on the Archbishop, to intercede with him on Row's behalf. 'After sundrie arguments,' we are told, 'Richard Chrystie came on with one weightie argument, saying, "Thir coales in your moores are verie evill, and my master hath verie many good coales; send up a veshell everie year to Culros, and I shal see her laden with good coales."' This argument, we are told, prevailed—like some others of a similar kind, which we have lately seen: and Mr. Row was merely confined to his parish, while others, charged with similar offences, were deposed.

Reverting to Mr. Robert Bruce, we learn incidentally, from the Session Records of Dalgety, that he was under suspension in the year 1646. The Minute is as follows:—

'May 10, 1646.—No preaching the Friday before, because of the minister's [Mr. John Row's] sickness, neither this day because the minister, at the appointment of ane Committee of the Synod, holden at Aberdour, was at Aberdour, with some other brethren of the province, hearing Mr. Robert Bruce his declaration, after his suspension.'

In all likelihood, this suspension did not involve any charge of immorality against Mr. Bruce. About this time several ministers were censured by the Synod for justifying the lawfulness of treating with the Marquis of Montrose; and this, probably, was Mr. Bruce's fault. This view of the matter is all the more likely, inasmuch as it points in the direction of Mr. Bruce's well-known leanings.

It does not appear that Mr. Bruce took any considerable share in the public business of the church; and he lived very much in the midst of his own people. With the exception of his flight, when Cromwell came to the neighbourhood—of which I shall have something to say in another connection—and a visit, of four months' duration, in London, at the close of the year 1660, we cannot discover any lengthened absence from his post of duty. He seems to have been diligent in his labours as a preacher, within the bounds of the parish, and had a laudable care of the morality of the

inhabitants. What the doctrines were which preponderated in his public teaching we cannot with certainty affirm. But the morality of the parish does not seem to have improved under his ministry; and, towards the close of it, there are signs of deterioration. There seems to have been a Reader employed at Aberdour as late as the year 1671. The likelihood is that he was also schoolmaster; for in that year a Minute of Session appears, to the effect that 'something was given to the Reader for instructing poor scholars.' This functionary read the Scriptures to the people between the second and third bells on the Lord's day.

Mr. Bruce evidently did not devote much of his time to the pastoral visitation of his parishioners; but, when he did gird himself to the task, he performed wonderful exploits. So far as I can recollect, after going over the Minutes of the Kirk-Session, it is only once that he is exhibited as tackling on to this work, and, in that instance, he goes through the whole village in one day, and over the country districts the day following. But this matter is so curious that I must give you the precise words. The date is 12th July 1657, and the following is the Minute:—'The minister desired the elders, that are in the toune, to attend him when he comes to their quarters, for visiting of the families; and that he will goe thorow the toune the morrow, and on Wednesday thorow the landward.' Perhaps the reason why Mr. Bruce could, on this occasion, spend so much time as two whole days in the visitation of his parish, may have been that, in 1656, he got Mr. William Cochrane to be his assistant. At any rate, we get an interesting glimpse of the usages of the time, in the way we find Mr. William appointed to this office. He has evidently been preaching for Mr. Bruce for some time in the beginning of the year I have just named, for, on the 4th day of March, we are informed that 'several of the elders, in the face of the Session, said that the honest men and women within the parish were willing to contribute to Mr. William Cochrane, that he may abide with them to

preach God's Word, being well pleased with his doctrine, providing that the contribution were done in ane orderly way. The Session, hearing of it, wes well pleased with the motion, and desired the elders of every quarter to try narrowly their quarters, and sound the people what judgment they are of, and if they will continue in that good motion: and make their report against the next day, that the Session may have ane sure ground whereon to walk, before they engadge with the said Mr. William. The Session, in the meantime, has desired the minister to draw up ane paper betwixt the parochiners and Mr. William Cochrane, that what they will bestow upon the said Mr. William yearly, during his abode here, may be subscribed, and to be tyed no longer, and Mr. William to subscribe for the fulfilling of those things that shall be injoyned to him.' There, you see, is the proof of the existence of business habits in Aberdour more than two hundred years ago! 'And how,' you will ask, 'did the contribution make progress?' I can tell you that too. A few weeks later, as the Minute informs us, 'the minister shew the Session the paper quhilk he had drawn up, betwixt the parochiners and Mr. William Cochrane, as he was afore desired to do by the Session, and red the same in their audience, wherewith the Session wes very well pleased. Severalls of the elders reported that they tried their quarters, what they were willing to do, as they were injoined by the Session, and said that all of them were well pleased with the motion and willing to contribute.' This was felt to be all very well, as far as it went, but still there was nothing very definite about it. And so 'the Session, desirous to know what the sum will amount to, before they ingadge with the said Mr. William, appoints the elders in the town to bring in their owne quarters with them, and what they will bestow yearly upon the said Mr. William (to be paid at the two terms Lammas and Candlemas), that a note may be taken thereof.' But it becomes evident that, if the people are to do their duty, the elders must show

them a good example. Mr. Bruce was too shrewd a man not to perceive this; and so we are told that 'the elders, being posed by the minister what they will bestow freely upon the said Mr. William yearly, that they may be good examples to others, these, who had resolved with their families, promised to give as follows:—Mr. James Stewart promised yearly to pay, for his family and Mrs. Duncan, his mother-in-law, ane double peace; Hugh Bailzie and his family, ane angell; James Hume promised not to be behind with Mr. James Stewart; William Hutsone and his family, five markes; William Patone and his family, ane angell; William Logane and his family, five marks; John Tod and his family, ane angell. This they have unanimously condescended to give, and subscribe the same when they are required. The rest of the elders, not having resolved with their families, desired continuance till next day.' And when next meeting of Session came round, 'John Anderson of Dachie (Dalachy), in face of the Session, promised to give five marks yearly; Andrew Finlason, thirty shillings yearlie; and Andrew M'Kie, three punds, Scotts money.' This has all the appearance of hearty liberality. I am afraid, however, that either the Session did not perform as liberally as they had promised, or that their good example had not the influence on others which was expected; for in the month of October of the same year, 'it is put upon the elders to go through their families, and desire them to prepare speedily for Mr. William Cochrane, seeing how he has gotten a call for Orkney, and so move them to pay to him the whole year, by reason of his indigency.' But even this appeal seems to have been made in vain; for a week later 'the Session thinks fit, seeing Master William Cochrane is going in all haste to Orkney, and cannot get in what is due to him by the parochiners, that he sould have fifty merks out of the box, to help him on his voyage to Orkney.' This taking of fifty marks out of the poor's box was probably of the nature of a loan; but we trust the laird of Kincavil and

Pitkeny and Mitchelston gave an additional fifty marks out of his own pocket to Mr. William, which would make the voyage to Orkney all the more pleasant at that dull season of the year.

The honour of being assistant to Mr. Bruce fell next to the lot of Mr. William Smyth. And, as it appears to have been the fate of assistants at Aberdour at that time to be invited to Orkney, no doubt through the influence of the Earl of Morton, who was proprietor of these northern islands, the inevitable call came in due course to Mr. William Smyth. But Mr. William seems to have been of opinion that a bare competence in the south was to be preferred to abundance of dried fish and a living imprisonment in Orcadia. And so the minister breaks the matter in the gentlest way to the Kirk-Session, asking how they are pleased with Mr. William, and whether they would be willing to give 'the little thing' to him, which they were wont to give to Mr. William Cochrane. It turns out that the elders are very well pleased with Mr. Smyth, and they are not only willing to give him as much as they gave Mr. Cochrane, but are prepared to visit their several quarters, and do what they can to induce the parishioners to do the same. I fear, however, that if Mr. Smyth had in the meantime nothing more to depend on than what the elders or people were ready to give him, his shadow must have been becoming rapidly less; and he must, at his leisure moments, have been regretting his refusal of the call to Orkney. At a later meeting, Mr. Bruce intimates that he has relieved himself of all pecuniary responsibility in the matter, by giving Mr. Smyth 'his leave;' and he further declares that, if the people wish to retain the assistant, they must at once set about doing something for his maintenance. And the last notice of Mr. William that we have reveals him in the somewhat humiliating position of being present at a meeting of Session, trying to induce the elders, and through them the rest of the congregation, to support him. The Session are, as usual, full of promises; and, as

we hear nothing further of Mr. William Smyth, we may conclude either that they performed what they promised, or that another call came from Orkney, and found him in a responsive mood.

Mr. Bruce died in the month of February 1667, after a lengthened illness; and his widow died, in the parish of Burntisland, in October 1688.

The next minister of Aberdour was Mr. Thomas Litster. He was a student of the University of St. Andrews, from which he had his degree of Master of Arts. He acted for some time as schoolmaster at Leuchars, and was ordained minister at Auchtertool in 1665. He was translated to Aberdour in 1668. There is little that is noteworthy during Mr. Litster's incumbency at Aberdour. The lengthened illness of Mr. Bruce, his predecessor, and the lamentable neglect of pastoral work during that period, entailed on Mr. Litster the disagreeable task of dealing with an immense number of cases of discipline, the nature of which, as well as their number, gives us a lamentable view of the morality of the parish at that time. He continued minister of Aberdour till 1689, when he died in the twenty-fourth year of his ministry. One of the few tombstones of any considerable age which have been preserved in the old churchyard is that of Mrs. Litster. Its preservation is probably due to its being built into the wall of the church—the gable of the chancel. It has on the top the letters $\mathrm{T}^{\mathrm{M}}_{\mathrm{M}}\mathrm{L}$, which stand for Mr. Thomas Litster, Minister. The epitaph runs as follows:—'Heir lyes the corps of Margaret Lyndesay, spouse of Thomas Lyster, Minister at Aberdour, who, after she had lived with him directly 20 years, and brought forth and nursed on her breasts 11 children, died as she lived, in love with God and Man, July 11, 1688, and of her age 38.' Of these children James became a captain in Colonel Hepburn's regiment in Holland, and Hugh was a sailor in the *Rising Sun* of the Darien Expedition. Mr. Litster was succeeded by Mr. Robert Johnston, who was

expelled from his charge at the Revolution Settlement, after which came a long and dreary vacancy of eight years, the sad results of which made themselves apparent during the incumbency of the next minister, Mr. David Cumming. But as it is not my purpose in this lecture to deal with the period subsequent to the Revolution Settlement, I leave what has to be said regarding Mr. Cumming to another occasion, and shall conclude this lecture with some notices of the public worship of the period with which we have been dealing.

Sabbath was, of course, the great day for public worship; but we should err much if we supposed it the only day on which the church of Aberdour, or that of Dalgety, in our neighbourhood, was thrown open. From the time when the records of our parish begin, and throughout the whole period of our present survey, there was public worship every Tuesday in the church of Aberdour. The custom of meeting in the church on a week-day for worship is not, then, any novelty, as some are ready to regard it. It existed more than two hundred years ago. It was only when more careless times came that it was given up. And great efforts were made to secure a good attendance of the parishioners. Thus, on August 20th, 1650, the minister is requested by the Kirk-Session to call attention to those 'who attend not the kirk on week-days;' and the elders are appointed to visit the houses of the people on week-days as well as Sabbaths, to see that they attend public worship. Usually at the beginning of harvest the week-day services were given up till the close of that busy season, but they were regularly resumed after harvest-home. Indeed, when Mr. Bruce was doing what he could to induce the people to contribute to the support of Mr. William Smyth, it was held out as an inducement to them, that, if they did the thing handsomely, there would be public worship on Tuesdays and Fridays, in addition to the Sabbath services. The time during which the week-day service was suspended

in the time of harvest was about two months. Thus, in 1670, the suspension of the Friday's service was intimated on the 14th of August, and its resumption on the 10th of October. This gives us an interesting note of the time when harvest operations began that year, and the length of time during which they lasted.

As far back as the Session Record goes, there is notice of the church bell ringing three times on Sabbath mornings, and most evidently these various ringings were not intended merely to give the people a note of time. Immediately after the Reformation, it was, as we have already hinted, proved necessary to use all available means to enlighten the people in Bible knowledge—the Roman Catholic clergy having left them in deplorable ignorance. With a view to this, the church bell rang at eight o'clock on Sabbath morning, to call the people together to hear the Word read, which was usually done by the Reader, this service apparently lasting about an hour. At ten o'clock the bell rang again, to summon the people to the reading of the Word and prayer; and the regular service, for devotional exercises and the preaching of the Word by the minister, began immediately after the ringing of the third bell at eleven o'clock. In some districts the whole of these meetings were kept up for a considerable time. Wherever there is a notice of the employment of a Reader, we may be sure that one or both of these morning meetings were still held. Of course they were originated mainly to meet a special want of the time—the want of such an education as enabled the people to read the Word in their families at home; but the want of Bibles was another difficulty that had to be surmounted in this way. It was no easy matter for people to procure a copy of the Scriptures at that time; indeed the purchase of a pulpit Bible was sometimes a work that demanded careful calculation. Thus, in 1668, it is recorded that the Kirk-Session of Aberdour have 'several times before been thinking how they may attain

to a kirk Bible.' To secure this end, they resolved on making a collection at the kirk-door, in basins, by Hugh Abercrombie, Robert Roch, and John M'Kie. This collection amounted to £19 Scots. Hugh Abercrombie was appointed to make the purchase, which probably entailed a voyage across the Firth; and having secured the desired kirk Bible for £18, 18s., the Session returned him 'very many thanks for his diligence.'

Two of the elders invariably went through the village during the time of public worship, to take note of those who were unnecessarily absent from church, and to see that no unseemly conduct was indulged in. This visitation of the town continued during the greater part of the seventeenth century; and for a considerable time the visitors went their rounds on Fridays too, to mark those who were unnecessarily absent from the week-day service. Those who were found absent, or behaving themselves in a disorderly manner, were summoned before the Session. Here, for instance, is Henry Tyrie, summoned before his 'betters,' on August 21st, 1649. 'The said Henry compears, and, being challenged for his not coming to the kirk, is found guiltie. Therefore, being his first fault, the Session has only admonished him not to do the like; and if ever he be found in the like, to be punished examplarly.' Then, as an instance of the disorderly conduct taken notice of in these visitations, on December 16th, 1649, 'John and William Hutson, in visiting the towne, fand that John Forfair and his wife wes drinking in James Orock's.'

It would be interesting could we have a peep into the old church, and observe the aspect of the congregation. The behaviour of the people in church seems to have been, as a rule, of an exemplary kind, if we may judge from the infrequency of any notice to the contrary. A few such notices do appear. Thus, in June 1650, Robert Lauchtie, James Hoome, and John Mutray, were sum-

moned before the Session for going out of the church during service, and were admonished not to do the like again. And John Baxter and William Stevenson were censured for going up and down the walk during Divine service. The preservation of order and decorum during public worship is demanded by politeness; how much more then by a spirit of reverence! We may, however, be permitted to question the wisdom of the mode adopted for securing this end, as shown in the way James Alexander, William Hegy, William Craig, and Andrew Coosing, were dealt with in December 1652, for 'making din in the church in the time of Divine service.' These worthies were ordered to 'sit down on their knees, and crave God mercie for their fault;' and it was ordained further, that 'if ever found in the like, they will be set in the jogges and banished the town.' But even this, although it must jar with our ideas of what church discipline should be, was quite in keeping with the ordinary procedure of those old times.

A few notices of the Communion seasons, and the way in which they were observed in the parish, will, I am sure, be acceptable to you. From 1654 till 1676 the Communion seems to have been observed in Aberdour only once in two years. This was the rule; but, owing to the troubles of the period, and other causes, intervals of three years actually occurred. On one occasion—from 1665 to 1671, during the latter years of Mr Bruce's ministry—a period of six years elapsed without any ministration of the ordinance. In those old days the Communion service, in our parish, was always continued over a second Sabbath—in most cases a consecutive one. The end contemplated in this arrangement, no doubt, was to allow the members of the congregation who were hindered from communicating on the first day to do so on the second. The change from this mode to one Communion Sabbath was effected in 1677. It was attempted the previous year, without success; some secret

influence being sufficient to command a second Communion Sabbath, after three weeks had intervened. There was no fixed time for the Communion in those days. Sometimes it took place in January, more frequently in April, October, or July; less commonly in May or August. When speaking on this subject, I may say, by anticipation, that, during the first half of the eighteenth century, the ministration of the Lord's Supper once every two years was still the rule. Not till 1763 did the yearly observance of the ordinance become the rule; nor was it even then tied down to any fixed season of the year. The service of preparation on the Saturday before the Communion, and the service of thanksgiving on the afternoon or evening of the Communion Sabbath, were generally observed during the seventeenth century. These were the only services for which the legislation of the Church had made provision. The Church has never enacted the observance of Fast-days in connection with Communion seasons. The Thursday service does not seem to have been commonly observed till about the beginning of the seventeenth century; and it was only after the memorable Communion Monday at the Kirk of Shotts, that the service held on that day became at all common. The multiplication of week-day services, in connection with the observance of the Sacrament of the Supper, is out of keeping with the frequency of the Communion service, which is so desirable.

A custom was observed, in those days, in connection with Communion seasons, which we would now think very strange. On the Communion Sabbath a collection was made at the table, as well as at the doors of the church. This collection was for the poor of the parish. The custom is referred to in the *Directory for Public Worship*, when treating of the ministration of the Supper. 'The collection for the poor,' it says, 'is so to be ordered that no part of the public worship be thereby hindered.' We cannot help thinking that, when made at the Communion table, it must

not only have hindered public worship, but have been liable to grave misapprehension. It is, therefore, well that it has passed away. There does not, however, appear to have been any marked disposition on the part of the people of Aberdour at that time, to wrong themselves by giving too much of their means away. For, in October 1659, I find the Session urging the minister to speak a word of reproof to the people about the smallness of the collections. This Mr. Bruce did with some degree of severity, assuring those who gave nothing 'that if they did not amend, their names would be publicly read out!' This was certainly sharp practice, and could not fail to be disagreeable to the non-givers, although we question much its wisdom and salutariness.

Great efforts were made by the minister and elders, before Communion seasons, to get such persons as were living at variance brought into terms of agreement. Sometimes, however, the mode adopted to secure this desirable end was what would now be thought very strange—the two elders appointed to deal with such cases repairing with their quarrelsome charge to a public-house apparently, and there getting them to 'drink and shake hands'!

The practice at this time evidently was to admit to the Communion table all, not grossly ignorant or immoral, who made a profession of Christianity; and it was quite a common thing to summon before the Session those who, being members of the church, absented themselves from the Lord's Table. Some misfortune had evidently befallen the Communion cups belonging to Aberdour. Perhaps they shared the fate of those owned by the parish of Dalgety, which were stolen, along with the money in the box, by Cromwell's soldiers, at the battle of Inverkeithing. For several years it is regularly noted, in connection with Communion seasons, that there was paid, for the loan of Communion cups, twelve shillings. At length it is recorded that two Communion cups have been purchased,

for 119 lb. Scots, with two basins that cost £10, 6s. 6d., and a mortcloth, the price of which was £63, 4s. 6d. Scots.

It is extremely interesting to mark the number and variety of the cases for which special collections were made for poor people, during the time of which we are speaking. I do not refer to the ordinary resident poor, but those who have become needy and distressed, through casualties and misfortunes, and sometimes have come from a great distance in quest of help. There is hardly a Minute of Session, in the neighbouring parish of Dalgety, at this period, in which there is not to be found some notice of money given to 'poor strangers.' In Aberdour, too, this in all likelihood was the case; but, from the way in which the Minutes are kept, it does not so readily appear. An interesting lecture might be composed of these notices alone. Sometimes distressed people from Ireland are wandering about the country seeking relief—men and women who have escaped from the massacre, by which the Roman Catholics hoped to quench the Protestant cause in blood. There are also those who were made beggars and vagrants by the wild raids of Montrose. Men from Muckhart appear, who had been spoiled in this way; and women, whose husbands and children had been killed, implore aid. Many such were found at the doors of the churches in those suffering times; and wounded soldiers and persecuted Covenanters; and part of the collection was generally given to them. Sometimes a whole tragedy is summed up in a single line, in connection with such cases. There was not, I suppose, a single collection for missionary purposes made throughout the Church in the seventeenth century. But many special collections, for humane and philanthropic objects, are noted in the Session Records of Aberdour and Dalgety—the one supplementing the other. Of these the following are specimens:—In 1654, John Brown and Archibald Hardie, in Inverkeithing, have had their houses burnt; and a collection, amounting to £8, 5s. 4d., is made

for them. Lieut.-Colonel Andrew Leslie is in difficulties, and for his relief £5, 16s. 2d. is contributed. William Menzies has fallen into the hands of the Turks, and £7, 6s. 2d. is given towards his ransom. In 1655, James Tailor, in the West Mill, has 'all his bestial smothered, by the falling of his byre;' and not only is a collection made for James's relief, but a letter is written to the minister and 'bailzie' of Burntisland, imploring aid. In 1657, some poor prisoners in 'Halyrudehouse'—debtors, no doubt, who had fled thither for asylum—get £11. In 1658, John Scott, in Burntisland, has 'fallen from means,' and gets £8. In 1662, William M'Kie, merchant in Dumbarton, has £7, 15s. collected for him. In the same year, 'a lady, recommended by the Bishop'—for the Church was again under Episcopal government—receives £4. In 1666, John Dick's house and plenishing are burnt, and the sympathising parishioners contribute £14, 12s. 10d. to aid him—the Session likewise recommending his case to the Presbytery. In 1675, John Gibson and John Reid, two sailors belonging to Inverkeithing, fall into the clutches of the Turks, and £45, 8s. is raised for their ransom and release. In the same year a collection is made 'to buy a horse for William Alexander, to keep him from begging.' In 1677, the schoolmaster at Dalgety has the misfortune to have his house burned, and he too gets a collection; while the Harbour and Bridge of St. Andrews, the Bridge of Inverness, and I cannot stay to tell how many more public works, are helped. These collections were all made in Aberdour church, and, no doubt, also in the other churches of the neighbourhood. But here I must stop. I trust the statements made to-night will lead to a more intelligent acquaintance with the history of the neighbourhood; and, as history is just a record of the experiences of the past, with a reference to the relation which these experiences have to one another and to their causes, it may be hoped

that something will be found, in what has been laid before you, which is fitted to be profitable as well as interesting. Our lot has been cast in the midst of clearer light, and more peaceful scenes and higher privileges, than characterised those old times. Let us strive to avoid the blemishes of the past, and, if possible, surpass its excellencies.

LECTURE IX.

Events affecting the neighbourhood in the Covenanting Times—Object of the Covenant of 1638—The grave of Robert Blair—His early life—His labours in Ireland—Seeks to escape persecution by going to America, but is driven back by storms—The Echlins of Pittadro—Blair's labours at Ayr—Translated to St. Andrews—Employment in public affairs—Appointed Chaplain to the King—His opinion of Cromwell—'Cuffed on both haffets'—Sharp's treachery and persecutions—Blair confined to Couston Castle in Aberdour parish—Death-bed experiences—Anecdotes of him—His poor tombstone—His descendants—The 'Engagement'—Renewal of the Covenant—The burden of the soldiers—Cromwell's invasion—The battle of Inverkeithing—Mr. Bruce's flight—The right of an Englishman to marry a Scotch girl—Aberdour men taken prisoners at the battle of Worcester—Margaret Gray's feelings towards her husband—Strange proceedings, with a view to discover Archbishop Sharp's murderer—Sufferers by fining in Aberdour parish.

I AM to call your attention in this lecture to the public events, both of a civil and ecclesiastical kind, which affected Aberdour and its immediate neighbourhood in a peculiar way, during the Covenanting Times. Within the compass of a single lecture only a few of the leading events of such a lengthened period can be noticed, and these notices, because of their brevity, must necessarily be of an imperfect kind. But it may be hoped, nevertheless, that such sketches as I lay before you will not be without interest, touching as they do on persons and places connected with the neighbourhood. It may be urged against such sketches, that they err by not taking a wide enough sweep. But to this it may be replied, that the student of history, in its local bearings, is not likely to be ignorant of the facts and lessons of general history; and the narrative of local events is

fitted to make the lessons of general history all the more distinct and impressive.

It is under the guidance of a simple chronological order that we reach the period, stretching from 1638 to 1688, or what is commonly called the Covenanting Times. The first great battle for the truth, in Scotland, was fought at the Reformation, to get rid of Popery. The second—which some speak of as already won in 1638, but which, correctly speaking, was only won fifty years later—was to get rid of a State-imposed Prelacy; and the battle that was waged throughout these years may, with great truth, be said to be that which achieved the civil and religious liberty of our country. That this was the great object for which the heroic men of that period so nobly contended, cannot, I think, for a moment be doubted by any one who has impartially examined the history of their struggles. And the history of their struggles is, to a great extent, the history of the whole nation during that period. We sometimes hear people speak of the Covenanters as if they were merely a small and bigoted faction of the Scottish people. This is a mistake for which there is hardly an excuse. In 1638, at the beginning of the fifty years' struggle for liberty, the whole nation may be said to have been a covenanted people. At least the nobles and barons, and burgesses and peasantry, were so overwhelmingly on this side, that there was little left on the other, but a small and insignificant faction. No doubt, by and by, conflicting motives produced divided counsels; and persecution tamed the spirit of many whose hearts were never truly in the cause, or, at least, not in it so thoroughly as to lead them to suffer for it. But from time to time the very extremities in which the good cause was placed, kindled anew the patriotism of the nation, and welded into a compact mass those who honestly differed in regard to minor measures, or the mode of their application. And dreadful indeed was the ordeal through which the Covenanters had to pass in the maintenance and

defence of their principles; and long and bloody the persecutions through which they unflinchingly bore the blue banner of the Covenant. Scotland, we repeat, owes much of the civil and religious liberty she now enjoys to the much-persecuted, and, almost up to the present time, the much-maligned Covenanters. My object, however, is not now to expound the principles involved in that long struggle. In addressing a Scottish audience these principles may be regarded as understood. I purpose laying before you a simple narrative of undoubted facts connected with our neighbourhood, in reference to the contendings of which I speak. In this way I shall put you in possession of materials from which you are at liberty to draw your own conclusions. And if any of you do not agree with the principles of the Covenanters, you will, I am sure, at the very least, admire their patience and courage and self-sacrifice.

In order that I may lay before you some illustrations of the contendings of the Covenanters, drawn from our own neighbourhood, let me ask you to accompany me to the grave of Robert Blair in our old churchyard. He was a remarkable man whose dust lies there. You would not be ready to think that one so great, and who occupies so prominent a place in the history of his times, should have so poor a monument as that crumbling tombstone. But there is a reason for this. He died a banished, and wellnigh a broken-hearted, man. His enemies could scarcely have denied him 'a little dust for charity;' they could hardly, with good grace, have denied him a grave. Yet it was remarked by a historian of the period as something wonderful that Robert Blair was buried in the daytime! It was considered somewhat bold, on the part of his friends, to lay the weary sleeper down in his bed of dust ere darkness had thrown its friendly cloak over those who ventured to render him the last sad office of humanity. It almost seems as if his enemies had forgotten that it was God's sun that was shining in the heavens in the year 1666—the

annus mirabilis—and not King Charles's or the Bishops'. Little wonder that a man, who dared hardly be buried in the daytime, had not a rich monument! For a time he had none at all, and when at length one was erected, liberty to put it up had to be paid for to the Kirk-Session. And it was judged wise on the part of his friends to set up only a plain and simple memorial of him, 'because of the iniquity of the time.' Wherein consisted the wrong-doing of this man? Let me tell you his story, in as few and simple words as I can.

Robert Blair was born in the town of Irvine, in the year 1593. His parents were highly respectable, and connected with some of the best families in Ayrshire. Two of his brothers were successively Chief Magistrates of the town of Irvine, at a time when municipal honours were more prized than they appear to be now. Another brother rose to be a Professor in the University of Glasgow. Robert Blair entered College in the year 1611, took his degree in 1614, and in 1616, when he was only twenty-three years of age, he became Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. Ample testimony has been left on record by some of his pupils, who afterwards distinguished themselves, of his scholarship and skill in discharging the duties of this office. But while devoting himself to his work as a Professor, he seems to have been himself taught what no earthly master could impart to him; and he longed to be employed in the work of the ministry. He was destined to be much of a wanderer; and his first departure in that line was due to his acceptance of a call to Bangor, in Ireland. His memory is to this day revered in that country as one of the founders of the Irish Presbyterian Church. But difficulties sprang up, from Episcopalian intolerance, which stood so much in the way of his usefulness, that he and several others resolved to leave the country altogether, and cross the Atlantic, hoping to get a field of unrestrained usefulness in New England. Strange

+ For "the story of his ordination" by Echlin see Harrison's "The Seot in Ulster" p. 58

to say, Bishop Echlin, from whom Blair received so much opposition in Ireland, belonged to a family long resident in this neighbourhood—the Echlins of Pittadro. When more than half the voyage was accomplished, however, such storms arose as drove the emigrants back, and they relinquished the intention of going to America. After they returned to Ireland, and from that to Scotland, we find Robert Blair and his companions, ere they settled down to stated labours in the ministry, engaging in the Communion service along with our old friend John Row at Carnock. Row's son, William, minister of Ceres, was afterwards married to Robert Blair's daughter Jean. We find the wanderer at length settled in the second charge of the town of Ayr, as colleague to Mr. Annand, in 1638. But hardly has he had time to become known there when he is called to St. Andrews. It was considered a desirable thing that a man so well fitted to fill one of the high places in the Church should be preferred to this charge; but it was with great reluctance that he went. The Assembly of 1638, by whose authority he was translated, was the famous Reforming one held at Glasgow, which began the fifty years' struggle for liberty. When settled in St. Andrews Blair exerted a powerful influence on the place, which was at that time the seat of three Colleges. The learning of the new minister found there ample scope, and among the Professors and students his influence was not only great, but fitted to tell over a wide sphere. His labours were not, however, confined to that city. For a short time he returned to Ireland to consolidate the cause of Presbyterianism there, but he still continued minister of St. Andrews. In almost all the public negotiations of the time Robert Blair was employed by the Church; and not unfrequently matters of high importance in the State were confided to his care. Thus, after the defeat of Charles the First at Newburn, Blair was appointed to assist at the ratification of the Treaty of Ripon. And he was one of the Committee appointed to

meet the English Commissioners to confirm the Solemn League and Covenant.

It is sometimes asserted that Blair, and those who acted along with him in these matters, were opposed to Monarchy, and were ill-affected to the house of Stuart. I can scarcely conceive how such an opinion can be honestly held by any one who has been at the pains to make himself acquainted with the simplest facts connected with the history of that time. The Covenanters were, almost to a man, in favour of Monarchy, and the great majority of them were devoted to the house of Stuart. This was especially true of Robert Blair. Indeed, as I shall ere long show you, there was a strong bond of esteem, I might almost say affection, existing between him and the King. It was after the battle of Marston Moor that he met Charles at Newcastle ; and from the first the King seems to have been impressed with his high qualities. Alexander Henderson being dead, Blair was installed as Chaplain to the King for Scotland, and Charles assigned the reason why he conferred this honour on Blair. 'That man,' said he, 'is pious, prudent, and learned, and of a meek, moderate, and calm temper.' But, mild as he was, Blair would sooner have surrendered his life than part with his principles. One of the most touching incidents connected with the death of the King was his urging the request, that Mr. Blair might be with him during the time of his imprisonment, and at his death. But the request was not complied with, to the shame, as we think, of those who refused it. And William Row informs us, that had his father-in-law been permitted to go to the scaffold with the King, he had resolved to lift up his testimony against what he considered to be Charles's murder, laying his account to die with the King, and that he would 'as willingly have laid down his head to the hatchet as ever he laid his head to a pillow.'

It might have been expected from such opinions as these, held by Blair, that his estimate of Cromwell would not be

high; and neither was it. Indeed, we can neither share in Blair's exaltation of Charles's character, nor his depreciation of Cromwell; but we admire the honesty of the man in firmly holding what he believed to be the truth. When Cromwell was in Edinburgh in 1651, Blair, Guthrie, and Dickson were the three ministers appointed to hold a conference with him; and Blair was deputed to sound the Protector as to his views regarding the government of Church and State respectively. Blair begged to put three questions to Cromwell. He asked, first, what the Protector's opinion of Monarchical Government was; to which Cromwell replied that he was favourable to it. In answer to a second question, he said he was opposed to Toleration. And when his catechiser asked what his judgment regarding the government of the Church was, Cromwell replied, 'Ah, now, Mr. Blair, you article me too severely. You must pardon me that I give you not a present answer to that question.' While Dickson went away satisfied with these answers, Blair expressed the opinion that the Protector was an arrant dissembler,—'a greetin' deevil' was, I believe, his exact phrase. And while it cannot be denied that under the early part of the rule of Cromwell a greater amount of liberty was enjoyed than during the reign of any of the later Stuarts, it has to be admitted that, ere it closed, the greatest of the Puritan divines shared, to a large extent, in Blair's distrust of the Protector.

But I must not indulge in further notices of Blair during the period of his laborious public efforts; I must advance to the time of his sufferings. During the contests between the Resolutioners and the Protesters in the Church, Blair strove to keep a middle path, with the usual want of success which falls to the lot of such as try to be neither on the one side nor the other. To use his own expressive phrase, he was 'cuffed on both haffets.' The restoration of Charles the Second was the signal for the renewal of hostilities against the Presbyterianism of Scotland; and in the miser-

able plottings and persecutions which were gone into to set up Episcopacy in the Church, and absolute government in the State, no one holds a less-to-be-envied place than James Sharp, who had been sent to London in the interest of Presbyterianism, and basely betrayed the cause he professed to uphold and defend. His correspondence with his brethren in Scotland during this period has been preserved in the pages of Wodrow, and forms one of the most lamentable monuments of treachery. Rewarded, for the part he had acted, with the Archbishopric of St. Andrews, there was one man in that old city whom Sharp could not tolerate, and that was Robert Blair. It would appear, from some statements made by Wodrow, that Sharp lay under particular obligations to Blair; but that was a matter of small concern to the Archbishop now. The Council followed the lead of Sharp in the path of persecution; and the magistrates of St. Andrews were ordered to summon Blair before the Lord Chancellor on an early day. He obeyed the summons on the 1st day of October 1661. He was now an old man, wanting only two years of the threescore and ten, and was afflicted with many troubles and frailties incident to old age. But these were accounted trifles in a time of persecution. The accusation brought against him was in connection with a sermon he had preached, on 1 Peter iii. 14—'But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.' It was late on a Saturday evening when the citation reached the aged servant of God, and on the following day he preached from the words, 'Finally, brethren, farewell,'—knowing, I presume, that when once fairly in the hands of the Council, he was not likely to be permitted to open his mouth in public again to his attached flock. When he reached Edinburgh, he was examined by the Council; and it looks as if they had been ashamed to state their accusation against him in writing; as in their Minute there is a large blank space, with only

the words in the margin, 'Act, Mr. Robert Blair.' But however ashamed they were to commit their charge and sentence against him to writing, it was carried out, although at first with a show of tenderness. He was, to begin with, confined merely to his chamber in Edinburgh; but, falling sick there, his place of confinement was changed to Musselburgh. In September 1662 a macer was sent to bring him before the Council; but he was found writhing under a painful disease, and could not be removed. He knew, however, what the Council wanted. They had meanwhile managed to get his charge declared vacant; and as he knew only too well that his enemies would never permit him to fill it again, he sent them his presentation. This acted like a sop to Cerberus. He was now permitted to remove to Kirkcaldy, where he lived for about three years and a half. While there he spent his time chiefly in writing *Annotations on the Book of Proverbs*—a work that was never published. He was, however, not to be permitted to remain in Kirkcaldy. It was a populous place, and it was feared that his influence there would be stronger than was desirable. Sharp, too, had been heard to vow that he would 'harry that nest,' and he succeeded in doing this. An Act was passed, which compelled the aged and worn man to choose for his place of residence a dwelling at least twenty miles distant from St. Andrews, and at least three miles from any town. The persecuted minister, now seventy-three years of age, had no alternative but to obey, or be cast into some dungeon-cell. He came with his family, in the month of February 1666, to Couston Castle, in our parish—the crumbling remains of which, on the border of Otterston Loch, are fast disappearing; and there he remained till his death.

There are some interesting incidents connected with his stay at Couston Castle. The spring air told favourably on him, after coming to the parish of Aberdour. He was able to walk in the neighbouring fields for recreation; his eye, no doubt, resting with pleasure on Otterston Loch, or taking

who while a Professor at St. Andrews seems seem to have acted as Blair's colleague. See article on Rutherford in the Encyc. Brit.

in the beautifully variegated scene that rewards the walk to the summit of Pinel Hill. But the locality had not, then, the attractions which present appearances would suggest; for it is described as 'an unwholesome place, surrounded with water and marshy ground.' Many pious persons from Burntisland and Kirkcaldy were drawn to Couston Castle during Blair's stay in it, and he was frequently visited by ministers who, like himself, were debarred from preaching the Word.[1] To them he was wont to say, 'As for me, who must shortly die, it is not to be regretted that I am laid aside; but it breaks my heart, and I cannot bear up any longer under this oppressing burden, that so many young men, whom God hath made able ministers of the new testament, should be laid aside.' He exhorted such to be busy, wherever they could, in their Master's service, and, like provident fishers, to be mending their nets in hope of more active employment. About the 10th of August he became sensibly worse, and felt that he was not far from his end. To the widow of the sainted Samuel Rutherfurd he said, when some were speaking of Archbishop Sharp, 'I would not exchange my condition, though I am now lying on my bed of languishing and dying, with thine, O Sharp, for thy mitre and all thy riches and revenues; nay, though all that's betwixt me and thee were red gold to boot.' He often repeated the words of the twenty-third Psalm, especially the fourth verse, 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.' And on one occasion he repeated the whole of the seventy-first Psalm: 'In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust,' etc. This he was wont to call his own Psalm. At length, on

[1] A tradition is current in the neighbourhood, to the effect that Blair sometimes, under the friendly cloud of night, ventured to preach in the chapel at Fordell. John Henderson, the laird, was an elder of the church at Dalgety; and Margaret Monteith, his wife, is referred to in Livingstone's *Characteristics*, as one of a band of his acquaintances who were 'eminent for grace and gifts.'

the morning of Monday, the 27th of August 1666—surrounded by his wife and children, and some ministers who were fellow-exiles from their flocks—he died in peace. He was buried, as the Session Record of the parish tells us, on the 29th of the same month; and his dust lies on the south side of the old church of Aberdour. He was only for a short time resident in our parish, but even that brief sojourn has added fresh lustre to a place, interesting on many other grounds; for, of all the buried dead that at least seven centuries have congregated in that most sequestered of churchyards, Robert Blair is, so far as I know, the very greatest. His life has a noble lesson in it; and his history, thus imperfectly sketched, throws more light on the persecutions of his times than much impassioned declamation would.

An anecdote or two may help to give you a more vivid conception of the personality of the man. And, first, let me give you a glimpse of his early ministry. Preaching one day before the celebrated Robert Bruce of Airth, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, Blair was anxious to get the opinion of such a great man regarding his discourse. 'Sir,' said Bruce to him, 'I found your discourse very polished and digested; but there is one thing I miss in it, and that is the Spirit of God.' The young preacher never forgot this criticism; and afterwards said it had been the means of doing him much good. Take now an anecdote relating to his later style of preaching. An Englishman, who had the opportunity of hearing Blair, Rutherfurd, and Dickson preach, declared that Blair showed him 'the majesty of God;' Rutherfurd 'the loveliness of Christ;' while Dickson revealed to the listener 'his own heart.' It is further related of Blair, that, when brought before the English Council, in the time of Cromwell, it was proposed by some to take the office of King's Chaplain from him. But after Blair had been questioned, the President said, 'It is well that this man is a minister; for if he were not, he might vex us all

with his great wisdom and policy.' And so they allowed him to retain his place and pension, and sent him away with honour.

And now, ere we part from the subject, let us take a look at his tombstone. The scroll that surmounts it bears the inscription, *Mors Janua Vitae*—Death is the Gate of Life; and the simple epitaph when translated runs thus: 'Here lie the mortal remains of the Reverend Robert Blair, a most faithful preacher of the Gospel at St. Andrews. He died on the 27th of August 1666, in the 73d year of his age.' I have already said that for some time no tombstone marked his grave. On the 8th of May 1670, one of his sons petitioned the Kirk-Session, that he might be allowed to erect a monument to his father's memory, and this liberty was granted, on the condition that he would 'give the Session satisfaction.' In August 1672, it is noticed that the monument had been erected on the 'south kirk wall' the previous week, and that sixteen pounds nine shillings Scots had been paid to the poor, for permission to put it up. It is expressly noted by Blair's son-in-law, Mr. William Row, that the meagreness of the inscription was due to 'the iniquity of the time.' And it does excite surprise that more than two hundred years should have been allowed to pass away without the slightest attempt to do justice to the many eminent qualities of the man, by erecting a worthy memorial of him. But this is too often the case. We reap the fruit of the labours and sufferings of such men, and do little to keep their memory alive.

Robert Blair was twice married: first to Beatrix Hamilton, daughter of Robert Hamilton, merchant, Edinburgh. She died in 1632, at the early age of twenty-seven, leaving three children,—James, who became one of the ministers of Dysart, and died early; Robert; and Jean, who, as we have already noticed, was married to William Row. Three years after the death of his first wife, he married Katharine Montgomery, daughter of Hugh Montgomery of Braidstane,

afterwards Viscount Airds.* By this marriage he had seven sons and a daughter, among whom may be mentioned David, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who was the father of Robert Blair, author of *The Grave*, and grandfather of Lord President Blair. And among his great-grandchildren were Dr. Robert Blair, Professor of Astronomy, and Dr. Hugh Blair, Professor of Rhetoric, in the University of Edinburgh.

We turn now to other incidents connected with the Covenanting Times, which affected this neighbourhood,—incidents, moreover, which have a closer bearing on civil than ecclesiastical interests. All who are acquainted with the history of the period know something of the famous 'Engagement,' that was entered into with King Charles at Carisbrooke in 1647. It was an arrangement by which the King was to be restored to power, without any effectual guarantee that the constitutional rights belonging to Church and State would be respected. The chief leaders in this movement—which entailed on those who originated it, or entered into it, the obligation to support the King with an army, against his subjects in England who were opposed to him—were the Duke of Hamilton; the Earl of Lanark, his brother; Lord Chancellor Loudon, and the Earl of Lauderdale. In considering how this movement affected our neighbourhood, it is necessary to remember that William, Earl of Morton, was a devoted Royalist. Indeed, he sold his estate of Dalkeith to replenish the King's exchequer, and it is computed that in this way he gave no less a sum than thirty thousand pounds. Opposed to the Covenanters, as he was, in their principles, and the main application of them, he would no doubt think those who entered into the Engagement right in as far as they supported the King, but wrong in as far as they attempted to put any check on his absolute power. The famous Marquis of Argyll, the leading nobleman among the Covenanters, was the son-in-law of the Earl, being married to his

* The coloniser of the eastern portion of County Down (Harrison's Scot in Ulster p. 18). Probably Blair had met his future wife when at Bangor. See ante 248

daughter, Lady Margaret Douglas; while Charles, second Earl of Dunfermline, who had entered warmly into the earlier movements of the Covenanters, but had gradually veered round to the Royalist side, was married to Lady Mary Douglas, also a daughter of the Earl of Morton. Lord Callender, who had married the widow of the first Earl of Dunfermline, and had his residence thereafter chiefly at Dalgety, had also sided with the Covenanters throughout their earlier struggles; but, like his stepson, he had come to espouse the cause of the King rather than that of the country. In these circumstances, the ministers of Aberdour and Dalgety were placed in a somewhat critical position, for the maintenance of their espoused principles. And how did they act? Mr. Bruce was at first opposed to the Engagement, but gradually, like most of the nobles of the district, he managed to get round to the Royalist side. Mr. Donaldson was opposed to the Engagement, and the principles it represented, and he seems never to have swerved from this position from first to last.

We learn, from the Session Record of Dalgety, that the Earl of Lanark, with some of Monro's followers, paid a visit to that parish for the purpose of prosecuting the Engagement; and there can be little doubt that Aberdour got some attention from them too. They do not seem to have been very successful in raising recruits in Dalgety; although, for three weeks, their influence was great enough to keep the Kirk-Session from meeting. But recruiting, in those days, was conducted pretty much in the 'purse or life' fashion. Many of the men of Dalgety adopted the plan of contributing money in lieu of personal service; and those who did enlist were subjected to discipline, by the Kirk-Session, when they returned from service. Thus, 'Alexander Thomson, ane souldier in the late engadgment, satisfied according to order, the last day.' What kind of satisfaction Alexander gave we probably discover in a somewhat similar incident, when John Cuik, the gunner at Aber-

dour, was 'ordained by the Presbytery to stand at the kirk-door, in sackcloth, between the first and third bells, for four several Sabbaths. And all this for his being on the late unlawful engadgment, and his bloodie carriage to noblemen and ministers.' Arrayed in this garb, John would not look particularly warlike or bloody; but probably he still looked daggers at the noblemen and ministers who came within eyeshot of him.

The times looked very threatening to the Covenanting cause in 1648; and there was a general renewal of the Solemn League and Covenant throughout the land. This was before the date of the earliest extant Records of the Kirk-Session of Aberdour; but we have an account of the way in which the work was gone about in the parish of Dalgety. It was on the 17th of December 1648, and the Minute in reference to it is as follows:—'The Covenant this day renewed, and sworn by the whole congregation, according to the order presented thereanent, and subscribed by the minister and Kirk-Session, some heritors and others, in face of the congregation; the rest appointed to meet the next Friday, at the Lecture, for subscribing of it.' It becomes evident, however, that Aberdour was more exposed to suffering from the tumults that now began to agitate the country than Dalgety was. The fact that Lord Morton was so keen a Royalist, and was the owner of a castle, which, although perhaps not, at that time, very formidable as a stronghold, yet held out accommodation for a considerable number of troops, to some extent accounts for this. And the village seems to have suffered severely from the quartering of troops on the inhabitants. Among the very first notices in the Session Record, in June 1649, is a reference to the appointment of David Stevenson, one of the elders, 'to go to Couper, and see if he could get Aberdour freed of the burden of the soldiers.' Some time before this Lord Sinclair seems to have been in the Castle. He was a supporter of the Duke of Hamilton in the Engagement, and

was Colonel of the Fife regiment of horse. A certain Lieutenant Graham was the cause of a great deal of mischief in the place about this time. He was on the point of taking his departure, in April 1650, and had the hardihood to apply to the Session for a testimonial, that is, a certificate of character, ere he left. But the Session, as they leave it on record, 'took it to their consideration; and, considering the great injuries that he had done within the parish, thought fit not to grant him one until he redresses these wrongs, and make mention how many men he has quartered here, and how long.' They, moreover, appointed Patrick Black to speak to him about this matter. I fear, however, that Lieutenant Graham gave the Session no satisfactory account of his proceedings, as, a few days afterwards, the minister was appointed to speak to Captain Agnew in Dunfermline, and try to get the wrong redressed; with the intimation that, if he did not give them satisfaction in this matter, they would complain to the Committee of Estates. There is also a notice of General Ruthven being in the Castle about this time.

An English army, under Oliver Cromwell, was now on its way to Scotland, and the battle of Dunbar soon proved a much sterner business for the country than the meeting with Charles's forces at Dunse Law. Indeed, the Engagement speedily showed itself to be the cause, not only of King Charles's death, but also of an incalculable amount of misery to Scotland. There can be little doubt that many of the sufferers at the battle of Dunbar belonged to the neighbourhood of Aberdour. To the wounded in that engagement, the Minute of October 22d, 1650, no doubt refers: 'The Session appointed a contribution to be gathered for James Johnstone's travail, and pains, and expenses, that he took upon the hurt sogers.' And Mr. James Stewart of Mains, and William Patton, went over the parish, and collected eighty pounds for the prisoners in England.

The close of the year 1650 was a time of intense anxiety

in the neighbourhood. Charles the Second had come to Scotland to be crowned, and Cromwell was speedily reducing the whole country under his power. On the 30th of December, just two days before Charles was crowned at Scone, we have the following notice of affairs at Aberdour: 'The quhilk day the Session and some of the heritors, in obedience to the Act of Parliament, and Act of the Committee of Shire, after reading of the orders to them, and showing to every one their danger and not obedience, did exhort them, as they love the honour of God, religion, and their own liberty, that they would now bestir themselves, and come all to the appointed place of rendezvous; and, if they shall not, we take God to witness that we are free of what evil shall come upon the refusers, and shall go ourselves, immediately, to the place of rendezvous, at Dunfermline.' This, undoubtedly, has reference to steps deemed necessary with a view to oppose Cromwell. Indeed, at this time, there is a vast amount of din and bustle about military affairs in the village. On one day it is recorded that the Session have 'no time for discipline,' they are so busy taking a vow of the men who have been enrolled. Another day they 'handle no discipline,' they are so busy going about the village pressing on the inhabitants the necessity of keeping up a nightly watch, lest there should be a surprise. In fact, at this period, the minister and elders might appropriately have donned regimentals, their hands are so full of military preparations. A considerable levy of men is made in Aberdour, the place being divided into quarters, and every quarter being obliged to send out so many men properly equipped. Each man was to be armed in a sufficient manner, and to get twenty marks from the quarter to which he belonged; and many other regulations are laid down to prevent possible abuses. The soldiers in the Castle are noted as exceedingly insolent and troublesome, so much so that the people could hardly get past the Castle gate on their way to the church.

But affairs became still more alarming when Cromwell's troops came into conflict with a part of the Scottish army on the occasion of the battle of Inverkeithing. This battle was fought on the 20th of July 1651, the object of the Scottish force being to intercept Cromwell, and prevent him from reaching and occupying Perth. I must content myself with a brief notice of this battle; and so am glad to be able to give you an account of it from the pen of no less distinguished a personage than Oliver Cromwell himself. This account is contained in a letter, of date July 21, 1651, addressed by the Protector to the Parliament through its Speaker. It is as follows:—

'SIR,—After our waiting on the Lord, and not knowing what course to take (for, indeed, we know nothing but what God pleaseth to teach us), of his great mercy we were directed to send a party to get us a landing by our boats, whilst we marched towards Glasgow. On Thursday morning last, Col. Overton, with about 1400 foot and some horse and dragoons, landed at the North Ferry in Fife. We, with the army lying near the enemy (a small river parted us and them), and we having consultations to attempt the enemy within his fortifications; but the Lord was not pleased to give way to that counsel, proposing a better way for us. The Major-General marched on Thursday night with two regiments of horse, and two regiments of foot, for better securing the place; and to attempt upon the enemy as occasion should serve. He, getting over, and finding a considerable body of the enemy there (who would probably have beaten our men from the place if he had not come), drew out and fought them; he being about two regiments, and about 400 of horse and dragoons more, and three regiments of foot. The enemy, five regiments of foot, and about four or five of horse. They came to a close charge, and, in the end, totally routed the enemy, having taken about 40 or 50 colours, killed near 2000, some say more, having taken Sir John Brown (the Major-General also commanded in chief), and other colonels, and considerable officers killed and taken, and about five or six hundred prisoners.'

Such, in the words of the victor, was the battle of Inverkeithing; but there is reason for thinking the account overdrawn. We have now to inquire in what way this event told on our immediate neighbourhood. There are no notices of meetings of Kirk-Session, nor meetings for

public worship, in Aberdour, from the Sabbath before the battle of Inverkeithing till the 4th day of November—a space of four months. On this account we have hardly any information about the state of matters in the parish. It is evident, however, that Mr. Bruce, the minister, betook himself to flight at the approach of the English; for, in the first Minute that occurs after the fight, the elders are requested to report what enormities have been committed in the minister's absence. From the reports given in, it appears that the two millers in the place—the tenants of the West and the Nether Mill—had taken advantage of the minister's absence, and been grinding on Sabbath as well as other days. Katharine Balfour had taken a leaf out of the millers' book, and had 'gathered pease' on Sabbath; while John Anderson, the quarrier, had been heard to 'thank God that the enemy had come to this side.' It is mentioned, quite incidentally, a few years after this, that 'the Englishes' had broken open the Aberdour poor's-box, as well as that of Dalgety.

The prisoners taken at the battle of Inverkeithing seem to have been carried into England. There are several notices of collections made, both in Aberdour and Dalgety, for 'the prisoners in England,' or, as they are sometimes more specifically called, 'the prisoners at Tynemouth Castle.' It appears, from some incidental notices, that an English garrison was left in Aberdour. At any rate, an English soldier had presented himself before the Kirk-Session, desiring marriage with an Aberdour girl, to whom he had become attached. This raised a grave question. Was the Englishman to be allowed to marry the girl or was he not? The matter was considered so important, and the true solution so dubious, that the minister was instructed to get the advice of the Presbytery. The Presbytery's decision was that 'he marie not the Englishman, by reason of the unlawfulnesse of thair invasione.' Now, with all respect for the wisdom of the Presbytery, it does appear

unreasonable to punish a common soldier for Cromwell's invasion, seeing that a member of the rank and file would never be consulted as to the lawfulness of that step.

At the battle of Worcester, which took place the same year—the Scottish army having, with considerable strategy, marched into England, as Cromwell's force advanced northward,—several Aberdour men fought in the Royalist ranks. Among these were John Reverence, Robert Cusing, and William Alexander. A common, and yet a very sad story, which reveals the case of many a poor soldier mortally wounded in battle, is preserved in the Session Record regarding one of these men. In the engagement, Reverence was hit by a musket-ball, which pierced his right shoulder; he had also a wound on his left shoulder, and one on his back. Cusing was near him when he fell, and, lifting his comrade, carried him some distance, and laid him on a heap of hay. Thoughts of home came into the mind of the dying man, and, little realising, amidst his weakness and mental wandering, how impossible it was to grant his request, he asked Cusing to go and bring his wife to him, for 'he thought she would never more see him alive.' Alexander, too, kept near the wounded man for a time; but neither of them saw him die, as they were taken prisoners, and carried off to a neighbouring church. Cusing and Alexander returned to Aberdour; but poor Reverence was one of 'the unreturning brave.'

The story is a touching one, giving us, as it does, a glimpse of tender affection between husband and wife. But in this world of ours, and many a time within the little world of a village, there are strange manifestations of an opposite kind; and these do not seem to have been entirely unknown in Aberdour in the seventeenth century. When a levy of recruits was leaving our village in those old days, no doubt some of the bystanders, who had no near relative in the band, would cheer the soldiers as they left the village. Others would be mute at the thought of friends

leaving for scenes from which they might never return. Mothers, wives, and sisters would be in tears. But it was not true of all the wives of Aberdour, at that time, that they wept tears of sorrow when their husbands left for the field of war. Here, for instance, is Margaret Gray, whose case has been preserved in the Session Record—as curious animals are sometimes preserved in spirits of wine,—and Margaret did not shed tears of sorrow when her husband, equipped for war, marched out at the west end of the village, on his way to Stirling. Her feelings, in prospect of a bereavement more or less prolonged, are of a less loving kind; for she expresses the wish that her husband may never return! But she has been indiscreet enough to give expression to this wish in the hearing of her neighbours,—not so loudly, we may well believe, as to be heard by her husband, but loud enough for it to find its way to the ears of the Kirk-Session. Margaret is accordingly summoned to appear before them, and asked to give an account of herself; and, if she did not love her husband, it is evident that she feared the Session, for she acknowledged her fault; 'wherefore the Session thocht fitt that shee sould sit down on her knees, and crave God mercie, quhilk she did accordingly.'

Meagre as the notices of public events in the Session Record are, there are still one or two that should not be passed over. In 1678 the whole country was in a state of ferment, on account of the tyrannous proceedings of the Court and the prelates. In Aberdour, one would naturally think, there need not have been much stir. No minister had been banished from its church, and the leading heritors were now all in favour of the State proceedings of the time; or, if they were not, they had not the courage of their convictions. Yet that year, although the Communion had been fixed for an earlier season, it was not celebrated till the month of July, 'owing to the commotions of the land that intervened.' A strange unsettled time it

was, when unprincipled men were set on high, and men of whom the world was not worthy wandered about in places where they were not likely to be recognised, subsisting on the cold pittance that charity doled out to them. In the Minute of September 21st, 1679, it is recorded that twelve shillings were given to 'an old reverend man.' Who was this? Evidently he was a stranger and unknown, else his name would have been given, as was usually done. Is it any stretch of imagination to suppose that, in this nameless stranger, some poor, persecuted, banished minister is to be found, whose appearance pleaded for him, when his name must not be breathed, in case his enemies should be put on his track?

On the 11th of May 1679 there was read from the pulpit of the church of Aberdour a proclamation regarding the murder of Archbishop Sharp. The proclamation is not, of course, engrossed in the Minutes, but a copy of it lies before me as I write. And it gives us a striking illustration of the value attached by the Government of the time to a Bishop's blood, when the blood of martyrs was falling thick as rain on our Scottish soil. Narrating, after its own fashion, the circumstances attending Sharp's murder—which, of course, we cannot justify,—the proclamation ordered all heritors and masters, within the shires of Fife and Kinross, to take their tenants, cotters, servants, and others dwelling on their lands, to the seat of the Presbytery within whose bounds they lived, on a given day, that some witnesses of the murder might examine their faces, with a view to discover the murderers. The day fixed for the Presbytery of Dunfermline was the 23d of May, and on that day, accordingly, the heritors and masters, in this and other parishes within the bounds, were to drive their tenants, cotters, and servants, like so many head of cattle, to Dunfermline, and be there by ten o'clock, that they might be inspected, with a view to discover whether any of them were actively concerned in the murder of Archbishop Sharp! For the crime of a mere

handful of desperate men, driven into that state by Sharp's own tyranny, the working men of two whole counties were doomed by the Government to a whole day's suspension of labour, and the suspicion of being concerned in a deed of blood. Comment on this tyrannous proceeding is unnecessary; for it can hardly escape your notice that it proceeded on the principle that all are to be held under the suspicion of being guilty until their innocence is proved.

It is an interesting fact, which throws a good deal of light on the influence exerted by the ministers of Aberdour and Dalgety respectively, that, while in the latter parish, during the Persecuting Times, twenty-three persons subjected themselves to fines, amounting to £8400, rather than do violence to their consciences, in the much larger parish of Aberdour there are only ten names in the list of sufferers, and the amount of fines imposed upon them is £3300. But it is to be borne in mind that Mr. Bruce, the minister of Aberdour, was a man of facile principle in regard to the public movements of the time. And when a minister can regard, with such comparative equanimity, questions which agitate, and even rend asunder, the Church, that he can take his side now with the one party, and now with the other—like Buckingham, 'everything by turns, and nothing long'—it does not give a very exalted idea of the domain of conscience; and the tactics thus displayed are likely to be followed by his parishioners, and even carried into the sphere of general morality. In this light all the more credit is due to those who, in direct opposition to their natural leader, marshalled themselves, in dark and stormy days, under the banner of the Covenant, and parted with their pelf rather than their principles. After search of an unsuccessful kind in the Sheriff-Court room at Cupar, and another, under happier auspices, among the Wodrow MSS. in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, it gives me great pleasure to tell you the names of those who suffered for conscience sake in our parish. The date of the first Decreet is 1682,

and the following are the names in it:—Charles Wallace, in Wester Bucklyvie, for house conventicles and withdrawing from the church, £300; Thomas Brown, in Aberdour, for ditto, £300; Marion Anderson, in Couston, for ditto, £300; John Sanders, in Easter Bucklyvie, for ditto, £300; James Adamson there, £300; Thomas Anderson, tenant in Cullelo, and his spouse, £600. In another Decreet the following names occur:—Janet Stevenson, in Doun-Inchquey, £300; David Hoom, in Humbie, £300; David Meldrum, younger, in Pitcairn, £300; and David Meldrum, elder there, £300. The locality in the parish to which reference is made in the last two entries, is, probably owing to the mistake of the scribe, beyond my ability to identify it.

Such are a few facts connected with our parish and its immediate neighbourhood, having reference to the Persecuting Times. These facts speak for themselves; and, compared with other parts of the country, especially in the west and south, this neighbourhood escaped almost untouched. In some districts of our native land almost every churchyard has its martyrs' stone; and traditions of Claverhouse and Dalzell, and Grierson and Skene, keep in undying remembrance the atrocities of those dark times. The rude epitaphs, which the hand of affection has engraven on these lowly tombstones, and from time to time deepens to prevent them from becoming obliterated, tell of the noble deeds and heroic sufferings of men, and women too, whose names are worthy of being held in everlasting remembrance. We sometimes hear lamentations uttered, because the Covenanters latterly took the law into their own hands, and offered resistance to the tyrants who were oppressing them. But, with a pretty full knowledge of the facts of the case, I declare my astonishment is that free-born men tolerated, so long as they did, the wretched government from which these oppressions sprang.

It is computed that, during the period of twenty-eight

years, between the Restoration of Charles the Second and the Revolution, no fewer than eighteen thousand persons suffered death, or the severest rigours of persecution in other forms. But as an English writer has so touchingly said: 'It would be endless to enumerate the names of the sufferers; and it has not been possible to come at the certain number of those ministers, or others, who died in prison or banishment, there being no record preserved of their prosecution in any court of justice. Nor could any roll of their names be preserved, in those times of confusion, anywhere but under the altar and about the throne of the Lamb, where their heads are crowned, and their white robes seen, and where an exact account of their number will at length be found.'

LECTURE X.

Mr. Robert Johnston, ejected minister at the Revolution—An eight years' vacancy and its baneful results—Mr. David Cumming's labours—His frequent absences—Labours of the Kirk-Session, as gathered from the Record—Number of elders—Their districts—Act for 'restraining the number of the Session'—Hugh Bailzie, a troublesome member—His pipe of wine—His tendency to 'take loans'—Episcopal jealousy of the lay element—Frequency of meetings of Kirk-Session—Efforts on the part of the Session to encourage family worship—Visiting the town on Sabbaths and Tuesdays—Dealings with neglecters of public worship—Certificates—Care required in drawing conclusions from Session Records—'Foully treated both with hands and tongue'—Dealings with cases of drunkenness—The notorious John Lochtie—The crime of selling drink to beggars—Sir John Erskine of Otterston—Dealings with Sabbath-breakers—William Craig's 'straiking of his wife'—A 'cock-and-bull' story—Case of murder at Croftgarie—Modes of punishment resorted to by the Kirk-Session: 'sitting down on the knees'—the 'joggis'—the branks—the stocks—sackcloth and the repenting-stool—fining—'Drink and shake hands'—Usages connected with baptisms and marriages—The system of pledges—The abuse of 'pypers'—'Penny bridles'—Usages connected with funerals—The beadle's hand-bell—The mortcloth—Burying in the 'queir'—The horologe—The cause of Education—The long labour to secure a school and schoolmaster's house—Mr. Francis Hannay—The doctor—Dealings with parents—Dame schools—Management of the poor—The box—Trades—Amusements.

In further prosecuting our investigations into the history of our parish and its immediate neighbourhood, I am in this lecture, first of all, and in a few sentences, to continue the notices, on which I have been able to lay my hands, of the ministers of Aberdour during the remainder of the seventeenth century, and then to lay before you some statements regarding the work of the Kirk-Session, from the period

when the record of their labours begins, till the close of that century.

Immediately after the Revolution in 1688, Mr. Robert Johnston, to whom I referred in a previous lecture, was ejected from the charge of the parish; and, for eight years, no successor was appointed. In the absence of authentic evidence it would be vain to conjecture what the causes were which led to this prolonged vacancy. The Revolution Settlement had vested the election of ministers of the Scottish Church in the heritors and elders, with the consent of the congregation. It is not improbable that the influence of some of the heritors is to be detected in the prolongation of the vacancy; but even of this we cannot be quite sure. Of one thing there can be no doubt, that this state of matters, which had existed so long, was most injurious to the parishioners, who were ere this, as we have seen, considerably demoralised. The evidence of further declension meets us in almost every page of the Session Record, as soon as the parish is again under the supervision of a minister. The first minister of Aberdour, after the Revolution Settlement, was Mr. David Cumming. He had been licensed in 1696, and was called to the parish in January of the following year. We get a peep into the old church, on the occasion of his call. Mr. Archibald Campbell of Dalgety, the successor of worthy Mr. Andrew Donaldson, preaches the sermon, and thereafter a meeting of heritors and elders is held, when Mr. Cumming's call is signed by all who are present. Their names are William Wemyss of Cuttlehill, William Orrock of Balram, and Robert Stevenson of Templehall, heritors. Two factors are present, and adhibit their names—David Beatson of Balbardie, factor for Charles Stuart of Dunearn; and Duncan Whyte in Whitehill, for the lady of Whitehill. The elders' names are George and David Moyes, John Davidson, John Johnston, and John Stevenson. And on February 24th, 1697, Mr. Cumming is admitted minister of Aberdour, after

sermon by Mr. Thomas James, minister of Cleish, who, a few years after this, was translated to be minister to the Company of adventurers trading to Africa and the Indies, and died on his way to Darien. We get a glimpse of the low state of morality in the parish at the time, when we find the Session enacting, on March 14th, 1697, 'that no seaman, master or servant, in this parish, presume to cross the water to Leith, as hath been their habit and custom, upon the Lord's day, with coals or any other goods, on pain of being rebuked before the congregation, and a penalty to the box of £4.' The practice of burying the dead on Sabbath, which, except in the case of epidemics or other great emergencies, is always indicative of low and unworthy views of the sanctity of that day, was not only quite common at that period, but the people thought nothing of burying in the churchyard while service was going on in the church! This abuse the Session endeavoured to grapple with and put down. Another indication of a low state of religious feeling among parents was that very few children were in the habit of attending church; and many of them were permitted to wander in the fields during the time of Divine service. Earnest efforts were put forth to remedy this evil, the continuance of which threatened to hand down the the moral blemishes of that period to succeeding generations. There are not wanting evidences of an earnest desire and effort, on the part of Mr. Cumming and his elders, to rectify other abuses which had crept into the parish. But there were two circumstances which greatly limited the amount of good actually done. The first is that Mr. Cumming was frequently from home, and that for lengthened periods. At one time he is absent for more than four months at a time, supplying vacancies in the north—no doubt in obedience to the orders given by the General Assembly to various Presbyteries at that time, 'because of the scarcity of ministers in these parts;' at another time the Session appointed one of their number to go to the

Presbytery and secure supply 'during their minister's absence in the north.' Another circumstance that limited Mr. Cumming's influence was that his ministry lasted little more than four years. The little we know of him leads us to the conviction that he was a good man, sincerely bent on doing what he could to elevate a long-neglected, and so a careless, people. He died in the autumn of 1701, in the fifth year of his ministry.

Having disposed of these facts regarding the ministry of Mr. Cumming, I have now to bring before your notice some statements regarding the Kirk-Session, their jurisdiction and labours in the interests of morality, education, and the management of the poor, with such notices of the trade of the place, its holidays, games, and other social usages, as crop up in the Session Records during the seventeenth century.

The Session, as you are aware, was composed of the minister of the parish, and elders who had been ordained to that office. The modifications that Episcopacy made on the constituents of the Kirk-Session will be noticed as we deal with times when that system of church-government was in the ascendant. The members of the Kirk-Session, in Presbyterian times, were, as a rule, selected from the best-educated portion of the community; and, from the Reformation down till after the seventeenth century, many of the noblemen and gentlemen of the country considered it an honour to serve as elders. And it is no slight testimony to the moral and religious character of the Scottish nobility and gentry of those early times, that so many of these classes held office as elders, and that with so much credit to themselves and the office they held. As regards our own immediate neighbourhood, statements made in earlier lectures make it evident that several of the gentlemen in it were members of Kirk-Session. Nor does any difficulty seem to have been experienced in getting a sufficient number of elders—a matter of great importance,

inasmuch as a task of this kind, to be carefully and heartily performed, must not be too burdensome. When a Kirk-Session was formed for the first time in a parish, the election was made conjointly by the Presbytery and the congregation. After it was once formed, vacancies were filled up by the Session as they occurred, an opportunity being given to the congregation to state objections. The newly-elected or appointed members were carefully catechised before being admitted, with a view to test their knowledge of Bible facts and doctrines. In Aberdour the difficulty seems sometimes to have been to keep the Session within reasonable bounds as regards numbers. In 1652 there were no fewer than twenty-one elders. The whole parish was at that time mapped out into districts, and these districts were assigned to elders, in a business-like way that might put some congregations in modern times to shame. This arrangement is in itself so interesting, and it gives such a good idea of the grouping of houses in the village and neighbourhood, more than two centuries ago, that I must give it to you as it appears in the Minutes. It is as follows :—'1. Robert Logan, for Couston; 2. James Hume, for Boupray, Damhead, and West-mill; 3. James Bell, from his own house till John Tod's, on both sides of the gait; 4. Andrew M'Kie and Andrew Finlason, their quarter from John Tod's to the bridge, on the north side; 5. William Wardoun and John Tod, all the south side, from Andrew M'Kie's new house to the bridge; 6. David Stevenson's quarter, from the bridge to his sister's, on the south side, and to Mr. James Stewart's, on the north side, taking in the Hillside; 7. William Patone's quarter, from Jonet Stevenson's till Hugh Bailzie's, taking in the Barns, the mill and the gardiner's; 8. Hugh Bailzie's quarter, to the east end of the town; 9. Mr. James Stewart's, from his house to James Fleming's; 10. William Fleming's, from his father's to the east end of the town; 11. William Orrock, Balram, Montcoy, the Mill, and Moyeshill; 12.

Robert Stevenson, Over Balmule and Nether Balmule; 13. James Alexander, for Collelo; 14. Robert Ritchie, for Crockgarie and Nether Newton; 15. William Hutsone, for Newton, Whytehill, and Lauchtie's house; 16. John Hutsone, for E. Bocleavie and W. Bocleavie; 17. John Anderson, for Dachie, Humbie, and Torriehills; 18. William Orrock, for Kilrie.' Thus the whole parish was divided into eighteen districts—ten of which were in the town, and eight in the country; and while fifteen of these were presided over by one elder each, three of the most populous had two elders each. Of course it is very easy to make such an arrangement as this on paper; but, if the elders were at all diligent, their districts would be well superintended, and not found to be too large. It is most evident that the village of Aberdour was much greater in extent, as well as more populous, then than it is now.

About five years after this arrangement of districts was made, there was a visitation of the kirk of Aberdour by the Presbytery; and one of the results of this visitation was an Act, passed 'for restraining the number of the Session.' A committee was appointed to carry out the changes contemplated by this Act. But, after the members of the committee have expended their strength and skill, the result seems very much out of proportion to the noise that has been made about the matter. There were twenty elders when the committee began their labours, professedly to secure a smaller number, by having a new election,—for this was the mode adopted for carrying out the provisions of the Act. Of the twenty original elders, fifteen were re-elected. But then, strangely enough, this number was deemed *too small*, and three new members of Session were added. In short, the whole plan was admirably adapted to rid the Session, in a roundabout way, of a few members who had ceased to be any ornament to it; and I have a shrewd suspicion that this was really the end sought by such a strange measure.

One of the elders not re-elected was Hugh Bailzie. Hugh seems not to have been particularly well suited for the office he held. On one occasion he is spoken to by the minister regarding the abuse of drink in his house—evidently a hostel in Easter Aberdour. And the hint is thrown out in the gentlest way, that, if the abuse is not mended, Hugh will be relieved of the burden of his ecclesiastical office. He promises amendment, but gets into difficulty again with great rapidity. It is noised among the villagers that his servants have brought up a pipe of wine from the Whitesands on a Sabbath morning. On being spoken to regarding this matter, the fact is not denied by the elder; but he urges in extenuation the plea that, if the pipe of wine had not been brought up on that day, it would have been spoiled 'by getting the sun.' No doubt, it was in the month of June 1652 that the deed in question was done—clear, warm, sunny weather, we may presume—the landscape all aglow, and the sparkling wavelets coming somewhat languidly in at Whitesands Bay, as if they too felt the summer heat oppressive. Not the best weather, it has to be admitted, for Hugh Bailzie's pipe of wine—claret, we doubt not, brought from France—if it has to lie all day 'beeking' in the sun. But then it was Sabbath, and Hugh was an elder; and many pleas of greater urgency might be advanced by poorer men, regarding property more precious to them than the pipe of wine was to him. Notwithstanding all this, the pipe was conveyed to Hugh's cellar. The Session, however, took a mitigated view of the case, and inasmuch as there was a danger that the strong sunshine might have injured the wine, perhaps it might have been added, some danger of pointing the cask out to the exciseman; and furthermore, seeing it was 'brought up before sunrise,' the Session dismissed the case with an admonition. Tender dealing seems, however, to have had a stimulating influence on Hugh, in the way of getting him into further difficulties. Great efforts

were being made at the time to collect materials for building a school; and a considerable store of stones and lime had been gathered. Hugh has some building of his own going on at the time, and not merely without the consent of the Session, but against the remonstrances of several of its members, he 'takes the loan' of the stones and lime; assuring them all the while, however, that he looks on the transaction in the light of a mere loan. The Session are very much annoyed at this *forced loan*, and it becomes only too apparent that Hugh is regarded by his brother elders as a thorn in their side. At a meeting of Session, on October 11th, 1656, the minister asks the elders if it has come to their ears that 'one of their number' was lately so much the worse of drink that he had to be led home. It is a pretty full meeting, and Hugh Bailzie is there, but all of them profess their ignorance of any such scandal being abroad—Hugh probably looking the most innocent of the whole number. Mr. Bruce expresses astonishment at this ignorance, as it has come to his ears that Hugh Bailzie is the person in question; and then, with all the emphasis of an Armstrong gun, he discharges the demand at Hugh, whether or not this is true. Perhaps it is due to the suddenness with which the assault is made, but Hugh at once surrenders. It *is* true, and he is very sorry for it. The clerk is appointed to see what Acts of Session there are in reference to such a case; and Mr. Hannay finds an Act which declares that 'if any elder were found in drink he should pay 40s., without any other censure.' A convenient Act for rich members, certainly. But Hugh is not to get off so easily as this; for the Minute reveals him—after payment of the fine, we may suppose—on his knees before his brother members of Session, 'craving God mercie for the said vice, and for being an ill example to others.' It is very soon after this that we find Hugh relieved from the cares of office. I may notice here a curious Act of Session, of date 22d January 1661, enacting that

'whosoever is found divulging what is done in the Session, shall, for the first offence, be sharply rebuked, and for the second, be turned off with disgrace.'

It is significant to notice how Prelacy is opposed to the influence of the lay element in ecclesiastical matters. In 1662, when that system was once more set up in Scotland to gratify the Royal will, the Bishop of Dunkeld wrote to Mr. Bruce, asking him to discharge his Kirk-Session, and select five or six godly men to assist him in upholding the fabric of the church, in providing for the poor, and censuring vice and ungodliness. Mr. Bruce does as he is bid, and, setting his Session adrift, appoints six men—whether godly or not we have hardly the means to determine. It is somewhat curious to notice, in this communication, that Mr. Bruce is asked to inform 'his brethren, who are next adjacent to him in the same diocese, that they are to do the like, as they shall be answerable.' There is manifestly in this an allusion to Mr. Andrew Donaldson, whose charge also was in the diocese of Dunkeld.

From 1649 till 1662 meetings of Kirk-Session appear to have been held weekly at Aberdour. On the occasion of almost every meeting the minister is found asking the elders, one by one, whether they know any who swear, or are given to drink; and whether they (the elders) are doing what they can to encourage family-worship in their quarters. The instructions given as to the means to be employed for encouraging this exercise are singularly minute, as the following extract, of date April 16th, 1650, will show:—'The quhilk day the Session are ordained to go through their quarters, and try who uses family exercise, and who uses to sit down upon their knees and pray to God; and they are lykewise ordained to hear the form of their prayers.' How strange this procedure would appear now! At a future diet the elders report, regarding the heads of families in the respective districts, that 'they see them use familie exercise, and hear the form of their prayers.'

Generally speaking, the members of Session have a good account to give of themselves and their labours. Sometimes, however, they do not attend the week-day service so well as they might, whereupon they get an admonition to do so, 'to be a good example to the people.' At other times certification is given that 'some other course' will be taken if this is proved insufficient. On one occasion it is enacted that elders absenting themselves from meetings of Session shall pay half a mark. But several of the parishioners would have no objections were the meetings held less frequently. Robert Young, for instance, who has been several times summoned for having his mill going on Sabbath, has been heard expressing the opinion 'that it wes never a good world since there wes so many Sessions.' For this freedom of speech Robert is 'rebooked shairply.'

Two members of Session regularly visited the town during Divine service on Sabbaths, and Tuesdays as well, to see that the people came out to church. This, of course, was a plan more adapted to towns than country parishes; and so it is a feature more noticeable in Aberdour than Dalgety. When any misdemeanour came under the notice of the elders they delated the offenders to the Kirk-Session, whereupon the accused persons were summoned, and asked to give an account of themselves. At other times, and especially in connection with more serious cases, bills setting forth the nature of the fault had to be tabled, and persons named who were to be summoned as witnesses. And before any were allowed to give evidence, the accused individual was asked if he had any reason to urge why such persons should not be heard as witnesses against him. Near relatives and persons otherwise interested, or suspected of being partial, were often set aside. It will, I am sure, surprise those who are not familiarly acquainted with the parochial arrangements of those early times, to learn how wide a sphere the Session had for their labours. A person coming to reside in the town was not allowed to do

so without a certificate or a 'testimonial,' as it was then called; and masters were not allowed to keep servants who did not bring such a voucher of character along with them from the Kirk-Session of the place where they formerly lived. There are several instances in the Record of servants ordered to be put away, because of the want of such a certificate. The design, no doubt, was to make sure that the incoming parishioners should be persons of good moral character; but this was hardly the way to secure that end, and it did not really secure it. Of course, masters are, to a certain extent, responsible for the character of their servants; but setting such value as this on a mere certificate was often found to be setting a premium on hypocrisy. In this matter, however, the Session were only acting up to the instructions given by the Synod of Fife. As an illustration of this, at a visitation of the 'Kirk of Kilmanie,' in 1611, it was ordained that no servant should be received without 'an authentic testimoniall.' And, at the same time, it was enacted that every cotter absent from catechising should pay 1s.; every husbandman or woman, 2s.; every gentleman or gentlewoman, 6s. 8d.; and every time a person was found drunk he was to pay 6s. 8d., besides undergoing public discipline.

In giving some idea of the jurisdiction of the Session, we shall endeavour at the same time to leave an accurate impression of the general morality of the parish. It must be carefully kept in mind that in such records it is the bad who are chiefly noticed. No one would be so foolish as form an estimate of the morality of the present time, in any of our towns or cities, merely from the records of a Police Court. Some discrimination is needed in estimating the *good*, in a place, by the proportion that the *bad* element holds in it. This we must constantly keep in mind. To begin with the lesser moral blemishes that appear in the Session Record, scolding appears to have been a very common employment of the idle wives of Aberdour; and this,

we may well believe, had its usual accompaniments,—dirty persons, dirty houses, and dirty children. In dealing with such cases the Session experienced great difficulty, the elders again and again reporting that, in their laudable efforts to reprove such offenders, they were 'foully treated, both with hands and tongue.' And I suppose it would sometimes be hard to say which weapon proved the most terrible. Profane swearing was another and a more serious offence, very properly taken notice of by the Session. I much fear that, among a certain class, this vice still abounds. The gross Court of Charles the Second did much to foster it; and at one time it was thought rather a gentlemanly habit to swear roundly. Hardly any one with the slightest pretensions to be a gentleman is now heard openly indulging in this vice, and it is greatly to be desired that the working classes would abandon it as alike foolish and degrading. It cannot be said that dishonesty, in the form of theft, was at all common in the parish in those days. A few cases of the kind are indeed found, but the process of dealing with such characters was both short and sharp. They were generally banished from the place. We have a specimen of this in the case of James Buchanan and his wife, who, in September 1649, were banished the town as 'notorious thieves and robbers;' with certification that those who harboured them should be fined in £10, and give other satisfaction, as the Session should deem fit.

Drunkenness seems to have been a commoner vice; but when it could be said that some of the elders were not free from fault in this respect, it is less to be wondered at that other members of the community did not think it a particularly disgraceful thing to be seen the worse of drink. The presence of the military in the Castle was a great means of encouraging this and other vices. Some of the women of Aberdour were, at that time, too fond of their 'ail.' Such notices as the following are not infrequent:—

'The Session ordains Walter Flooker's wife and Christian

Ritchie's mother to be summoned for drinking during the time of Divine service.' At another time it is ordained that Mr. Andrew Donaldson, of Dalgety, is to be 'told about Sandy Anderson's mother's drinking and flyting.' While Janet Taylour, admitting that she was the worse of drink, pleads the excuse, which is not entirely unknown in modern times, that 'she was not accustomed to drink; it was through long abstinence, and a little ran in her head.' Various notices prove the truth of the common saying, that when a woman is given to drink, modesty and virtue are generally given to the winds. Hardly any of the parishioners of Aberdour acquired such notoriety for bibulous habits as John Lochtie did. At an early date it is noted, with evident consternation, by the Session, that 'John Lochtie has been in Aberdour a whole night;' and it is evidently taken for granted that John could not be a whole night in the town without being the worse of drink. As a natural sequel to this, we find John by and by before the pulpit confessing his fault. Then he finds surety for £10 that he will come under censure if he is in the fault again; and the Session, on their part, give him the assurance that, if they do find him in the fault, they will 'banish him from the town.' About half a year passes, and John is just where he was before. On this occasion the Session look a little deeper than John's propensities, and deal with some temptations to their display. Two of the elders are sent 'to the browsters, to discharge them selling him any ail, except small drink; which they agree to.' The drink from which John was thus debarred was probably akin to that which Chaucer calls 'mychtie aill;' but either the 'browsters' do not keep their promise, or—striking out a path in which some *bona fide* travellers of the present day follow him—John gets 'mychtie aill' elsewhere, for he is still troublesome to the Session. Six whole years pass away, and John is an older man, and apparently a little wiser. For, the next time we get a glimpse of him he 'lays a tie on himself,' to use the

words of the Minute, 'not to drink ail of any kind for the space of a year.' How this plan succeeded we cannot positively say; but it is only in accordance with common sense that they who cannot use, without abusing, anything that is not necessary to life, should abstain from it altogether. Let no one say that teetotalism is a thing of yesterday! John Lochtie became an adherent of the system more than two hundred years ago, on the 'short pledge' system; and appearances are in favour of the supposition that John may at length have taken the 'long pledge' of total abstinence for life.

Not only did the Session labour to keep the inhabitants of the place from abusing the 'browster's ail;' they were at great pains to prevent the beggars who came to the town from being supplied with it. Thus Isobel Johnston had to appear before the pulpit, in July 1654, and crave pardon for her offence 'in selling drink to beggars;' and she was quietly told that, in the event of the offence being repeated, a fine of £10, and 'the jogges,' will be the consequence. A few years later we find Isobel before the Session again, charged with 'selling ail to beggars till they are beastly drunk, which is a means of drawing them all to this towne.' It is evident from this that some restrictions were imposed on the sale of drink to beggars in other places in the neighbourhood. When Isobel is dealt with, she can hardly be made to see that she has been guilty of any fault. One of her excuses is, that 'she was necessitate so to do, as she had to buy bear from them to sow her lands.' This points to a curious combination of begging and merchandise! But the Session do not let Isobel ride off on this plea. They oblige her to find caution for her future good behaviour under a penalty of £10.

I have been speaking of the intemperance of beggars; but sometimes it was found that those who transgressed in this way were at the opposite end of the social scale. Thus Sir John Erskine of Otterston, through several

notices that appear in the Session Record of Dalgety, has obtained an unenviable notoriety. At one time an elder of Mr. Donaldson's, and diligently co-operating with him in good works, we find that by and by Sir John 'ordinarily goes abroad to other churches on the Lord's day;' and, some time afterwards, a deputation is appointed to meet with him, and ask him 'to forbear tipling in Aberdour.' At a later time still we find him accused of 'drinking and tipling whole days in Aberdour.' Then we find him rebuked by the Session, of which he had formerly been a member; and poor Sir John's career, as far as we can trace it, is a downward one.

Sabbath-breaking was a rather common offence in the parish of Aberdour. One of the forms of it, which we have already noticed in another connection, was keeping the grain-mills going on the Lord's day. Again and again James Taylor, in the West Mill, and Robert Young, in the Nether Mill, are dealt with for this offence. It was found necessary too, to impose a fine of twenty shillings on 'browsters' who 'masked' on Sabbath night. Very few went near the boats in the harbour in the earlier days referred to in the Session Record. On two occasions, indeed, some boys are dealt with for rowing about in the bay; but I recollect of meeting with only one or two cases of grown-up persons being taken on discipline for this offence, in those early days,—one of them being John Anderson, who had crossed from Leith to Aberdour on Sabbath. Aggravated cases of Sabbath-breaking, however, became quite common after the long vacancy in the church that followed the Revolution Settlement, as I have at an earlier stage of this lecture shown. Among cases of a less aggravated kind may be noticed that of a woman named Condie, found guilty of spreading lint on the Sabbath; and that of John Stevenson, who is accused of 'stepping and pacing, and metting [measuring] land' on Sabbath, saying all the while 'that he suld have ane rycht of his brother, by law, and if

not he would have ane mendis of his skinne, if he suld be hanged upon the morrow.'

To come to still more serious cases: I find that, in 1650, the fine for 'straiking of his wife,' in the case of William Craig, was ten pounds. It is hardly necessary to say that the offence was one of striking, and not of stroking. Misdemeanours of this kind were, I regret to say, rather common in Aberdour in those days; for in 1652 Mr. Bruce reports to the Session that 'he spoke privately to them that strikes their wifes; who promised to amend their lives, by the grace of God.' In the same line of unlawful pugilism was the case of Major Phin, who struck his servant on the Sabbath-day, and was ordered to be spoken to and rebuked by the minister in private.

Now and again, in those old days, cock-and-bull stories of enormous offences, which had no existence save in the imagination of those who devised or repeated them, were noised abroad. Such a tale was that, which you might have heard every gossip in Aberdour repeating, with rueful countenance and sundry grave shakes of the head, at the beginning of the year 1659, when Lady Kinnoul, the daughter of William, Earl of Morton, was living in the Castle. The story, in a sentence, was, that the remains of a dead child had been found in one of the cellars of the Castle. And so deep and widespread was the sensation made by the rumour, that minister and elders went in procession to the old keep, to investigate the truth of the story. The members of the Kirk-Session of that time seem to have been good comparative anatomists; for with one consent they affirmed that the remains consisted 'of hen, geese, and veal bones.' The tragedy degenerated into comedy, except in the case of some of the gossips, who are subsequently seen standing in the 'jogges.' Of cases of a grosser kind, which are still a disgrace to our country, and especially some of the agricultural districts of it, I do not say a word more.

Let us give a single look at the vagrants who used to infest our neighbourhood in those days. In some obscure corner of our old churchyard lie the remains of one of these—a poor woman who lost her life in a brawl, at Croftgarie, in July 1654. Several vagrants—a man who gave his name as 'John a' Gordon' and three women—came to the farm of Croftgarie, and lodged in one of the outhouses. A quarrel arose between them, in which knives, stones, and stakes of wood seem all to have been used, and one of the women was left dead. The sad affair was made known to the Session by Robert Ritchie, one of the elders, who also informed them that the man who had been guilty of the murder 'had gotten away.' After deliberation, the Session, as the Minute assures us, 'thocht it expedient that the corpse should be interred, and appointed the beadle to make ane grave, in the obscurest part of the churchyard; and, withall, to summon, against the next Session day, all these in Croftgarie who is thocht to give anie light anent the murder, or any other who was known to be present at Croftgarie when the murder was committed.' Six days after this we have the following Minute, which merits preservation, not merely on account of the facts bearing on the sad case which it records, but also for the specimen it gives us of the language then in common use. The date is 17th July 1654, and the precise words are as follows:—'The which day compeared James Ferguson, being cited before, to declare what he knew anent the murdering of the beggar, declared that, when he came from the stone quarrie, he saw the beggars fighting, and saw the beggars holding ane man in the byre; and that the man's awn wife, together with the woman's sister who was felled, had both of them drawn knyfes in their hand, striking in upon the man with the knifes, and cuist in stones upon him, and he cuist forth at them pieces of trees; and, when he came furth himself, he took up ane stoak [stake] and hit his awn wife that she fell to the ground; and that he spat in his loof, when he

took up the staik in his hand, and said that he wald be guid enuch for ane hundred of them—and thereafter [the witness] said that he went into his master's house, and the scriech arose that he had felled ane woman; whereupon he, with the rest of the familie, came furth, and fand that the woman was dead. So that he, with Robert Cant, went and followed him [the murderer], and that they called the man back; and declared that the man came back again to them, and that they put him into ane barne, and left the man there; and said that he [the witness] and the rest inquired his name, who called himself John a' Gordon.'

It is not improbable that John a' Gordon may have been one of a band of gipsies—some of whom bore that name. But in spite of the effort made by Ferguson and others to imprison him, it is evident that the murderer made his escape; and we hear no more of him.

I must now allude to some of the modes of punishment to which the Session resorted in cases of discipline. That any punishment, other than that of a moral kind, should ever have been resorted to by Church Courts, is deeply to be regretted. The practice was a departure from New Testament precedents, to adopt those which had been invented by the Romish Church. But the views now generally entertained regarding these matters were not formed all at once, after Reformation times. Progress is made by a succession of steps; and we must judge of the actions of the men of the past by the light they had, not the light we possess. The men of the seventeenth century had made a great advance, in such matters, on the times preceding the Reformation, as we have done on their times. Perhaps the men of next century will think our methods far from perfect. The first and simplest mode of punishment employed by Kirk-Sessions, at the time we speak of, was to make the offender go down on his knees, and ask pardon of God. I do not think the members of Session ever intended this to be understood as a going down on the knees to them. A

severer punishment was to do this, either on week-days or Sabbath-days, in presence of the congregation. Then the 'jogges,' a species of iron collar, came into play. Some of you may have seen them ; I have to confess that I have been in them at the old church of Panbride. Perhaps, however, I should guard my statement by saying that it was not in the way of church censure I had this experience. To the uninitiated I should say that the 'jogges,' or 'jugges,' are formed of two semicircles of iron, joined in one place by a hinge, and fastened at the opposite side by a padlock. They were generally attached to the wall of the church, near the door, by a chain. The Aberdour 'jugges' were removed in the year 1736, and the reason assigned for this measure is stated in a Minute of that year : 'It was agreed on that the jugs should be taken away from the church door, being put up there in time of Episcopacy.' The 'branks' was another instrument of punishment. It too was made of bands of iron, encircling the head, while a circular jagged piece entered the mouth and kept the culprit from speaking. This punishment was generally awarded for scolding ; but witches were, in many cases, burned with the branks on. Then came the 'stocks,' made of heavy bars of wood, by which the feet were enclosed. They are frequently referred to, in the Session Record of Dalgety, as used by the laird of Fordell, acting as civil magistrate. 'Sackcloth' and the 'repenting-stool' were generally used for cases of sexual transgressions, which, wherever they occur, are a disgrace to a neighbourhood. The person who wore sackcloth was generally ordered to be barefooted. 'Scourging' was frequently resorted to in the case of boys who misbehaved ; and banishment from the town or parish was kept as a last resort in dealing with the incorrigible. We get a curious glimpse of the manners of the time, in the case of a footman of Lord Morton's, who, in 1672, was accused of having gone into a servant's room through the window. When this was represented to Lord Morton, he sent a

message to the Session, by the hands of Hugh Abercrombie, to the effect that 'my lord would cause scourge his man, and put him out of his service for his pains.'

Something must be said regarding the fines imposed by the Kirk-Session, of which we have had many instances laid before us. It is greatly to be regretted that this mode of dealing with offences should ever have been resorted to by any Church Court; as the money paid was likely to be looked on, by many, as a *quid pro quo*, or satisfaction made for the wrong done. But it is either an ignorant assertion or a calumny to say, as some have done, that these fines were imposed by the ministers of the time for selfish personal ends. The fines were imposed by the Session, not the minister individually, and the sums paid were applied to the support of the poor, or other parochial uses. Moreover, many of the fines levied by Kirk-Sessions, towards the close of the period with which we are dealing, were imposed by Parliament, and not by the Church Courts. Thus, on June 18th, 1673, Hugh Abercrombie is requested to uplift the fines for drunkenness, swearing, scolding, and the like, 'according to the 16th Act of the late Parliament; and this he agrees to do, 'when the sughe of peace shall authorize him.'

A singular custom, already noticed, prevailed in those early times, in connection with the Session's efforts to compose quarrels; and, not infrequently, this was done in prospect of a Communion season. It would sound rather strangely for a Kirk-Session, now-a-days, to appoint two of their number to see those who had been living in disagreement 'drink together and shake hands.' Yet nothing was more common in our neighbourhood in those days. Thus, in July 1652, James Fergusson and his wife, and David Morris and his wife, have been spending a great deal of breath, to very little purpose, in 'flyting.' The matter becomes notorious, and reaches the ears of the Session. The disputants appear, in answer to citation, and are ordered

to give up their quarrelling, and become good friends again; and, in token of this, they are asked 'to take one another by the hand and drink together.' One might have supposed that the former of these acts would have been sufficient to cement the broken friendship, without the latter, as drinking not infrequently leads to quarrelling, and intensifies it where it already exists. But the members of Session are of another mind, and, as they have not got the length of having the drink 'on the premises,' they appoint two of their number to see the process gone through in a canonical manner—whether in Hugh Bailzie's hostel or in a private house the Record does not say. The first step is to get pen and ink, and write down the terms of the agreement. James Fergusson is unable to write—a common infirmity in those days—but he touches the pen, when one of the elders, or Mr. Francis Hannay, the schoolmaster, signs his name to a statement, purporting that the said James shall do David Morris and his wife no bodily harm, under a penalty of twenty pounds; it being stipulated that David Morris's wife is to leave off her scolding. And then David Morris's wife engages, under an equal penalty, that she will neither scold James nor his wife. These preliminaries being settled, the ale is produced, and there is a general shaking of hands and a drinking of healths, on the part of the former belligerents; and, at next meeting of Session, the two elders gravely report that they saw the parties drink together, in token of renewed friendship. It is to be hoped the Session had some bye-law limiting the time during which these friendly graspings and mutual salutations were to go on, or limiting the amount of ale to be consumed: otherwise, I much fear, they would not always end quite so harmoniously as they began. I should not wish to leave the impression that this mode of soldering quarrels was confined to Aberdour. In Burntisland, as I have evidence to show, the same plan was followed: but I have not met with a single instance of it in the parish of Dalgety, during

the pastorate of Andrew Donaldson. My impression is that it points to a low tone of religion, wherever it is found.

I must now give you some idea of the way in which baptisms and marriages were celebrated in the parish in those days. There is not much to say regarding baptisms. In some cases, where it was feared that the education of children might not be attended to, surety had to be found, before baptism, that the child should be instructed. In the case of some of the wealthier people of the parish, the baptism of a child was made the occasion of feasting and merrymaking, very much out of keeping with the solemnity of the ordinance. This was emphatically the case with the baptism of the children of Major Phin of Whitehill. So noisy was one of these occasions that Hugh Bailzie's wife goes 'across the water' for three days to shun the noise and tumult; and Henry Sinclair gets into mischief because of the temptation put in his way. This seems to point to some noisy entertainment in Hugh's hostel in Easter Aberdour; and, accustomed as his wife must have been to some measure of bustle and excitement, she was evidently apprehensive of no ordinary amount of racketing, when she betook herself to flight for three whole days to escape it. There is a singular notice connected with the celebration of a baptism, which reveals a degree of boorishness in one of the parishioners that strikes one with astonishment. In 1655 several children were to be baptized on a certain Sabbath,—Richard Smyth's infant being one of the number. Richard, it appears, was very anxious that his child should be baptized before the others; and he carried this feeling so far that he pushed and jostled the other parents, so as to cause quite an excitement in the church. How we should wonder at such an exhibition now-a-days! Nothing could be more decorous than the behaviour witnessed in our churches on all occasions.

In reference to marriages, the Session Record abounds in notices of persons contracted to be married. This cere-

mony was not only very common, but it seems to have been generally gone through in presence of the Kirk-Session. Proclamations were usually made on three successive Sabbaths; and the persons proclaimed had always to lodge a pledge in money with the Session before marriage. This pledge, in ordinary cases, amounted to five pounds Scots, although it was sometimes more. When no evidence of misbehaviour appeared, this pledge was returned at a stated time after marriage; otherwise it was forfeited, and went to the support of the poor, or some other of the uses to which the money in the box was applied. In some instances, a poor wight is desirous of being married, but has not the sum to be laid down as his pledge. In that case, he either gets a neighbour to become security for him by depositing the needed sum; or a pledge, which can now be claimed by its original depositor, is allowed by him to remain in the box for a second term of months. A great many of these pledges, I am sorry to say, were forfeited; and it was on this account no credit to Aberdour that its box was so rich. It was customary for members of the wealthier class, when proclaimed, to make a gift to the poor; and sometimes, when in such circumstances nothing is given, the fact is carefully recorded. Thus, when Alexander Monro, governor, or as we would now say, tutor, to my Lord Dalkeith, was contracted to be married to Anna Logan, it is stated that 'he gave nothing to the poor as yet.' As the pen has subsequently been drawn through the words, we may conclude that Mr. Alexander at length did the handsome thing, although he was evidently somewhat slow about it.

The marriage ceremony, I have no doubt, was performed by the minister much in the same way as at present. It appears that a collection for the poor was sometimes made at marriages. Thus, in 1682, there is a notice of three pounds having been raised in this way; but that was during the reign of Episcopacy, and the marriage ceremony was, in all likelihood, performed in the church. Weddings seem

to have been very noisy affairs among the common people in the seventeenth century. In January 1653 we are told, in a Minute of Kirk-Session, that 'it is reported by some of the elders that there is ane great abuse at brydalls, with pypers and the like.' The pipers, I presume, would accompany the marriage party from the house of the bride's relatives to that of the bridegroom; and to those who courted notoriety, or whose spirits were flagging, the music might not be altogether without its use. But if the pipes referred to were of the genuine robust Highland type, and more especially if there were several of them within the house in which the wedding party was assembled, the effect would be more striking than pleasant. It was, in all likelihood, on a wide view of the whole accompaniments and effects of these demonstrations on the pipes, that the Session, 'for restraint thereof,' ordained that in future those who were about to be married must consign two dollars into the treasurer's hands, which should be restored after the marriage, provided there had been no abuse by pipers; but, in the event of such abuse, the said two dollars were to be confiscated for the use of the poor. John Segy had the misfortune not to be married till after the time when this enactment passed into parochial law. Moreover, John would seem not to have had two dollars of his own after laying down his marriage pledge; but the Session proved accommodating. He tabled one dollar, and found security for the other, 'in case he sould admit playing at his marriage.' But John was a man who had some respect for the parochial authorities, as well as a becoming regard to the safety of the two dollars. There were therefore no pipers rending the drums of the ears of the guests at John's wedding. So he got up his pledge, with, however, the abatement of 21s. 6d. to the poor, 'because he was married out of the parish.' This looks rather shabby on the part of the Session, seeing that John's bride may have belonged to another parish; or, if that did not hold, he may, out of regard to his pledge, have

gone to be married in some neighbouring parish where there were no pipers! The Act against piping at marriages seems to have had a good effect for a time; but, like many other enactments, it began by and by to be lost sight of. Aberdour had, no doubt, a piper of its own; and, in addition to this, Piper Drummond of Auchtertool had a trick of coming down pretty frequently to the village—often, we regret to say, taking more ale than did him good. In short, many causes combined to throw the Act against piping into the shade. But in 1660 it was renewed; and that year was famous in the village, inasmuch as it fixed the tariff of charges in connection with baptisms and marriages. It was resolved by the Session that at every marriage the schoolmaster should have 24s. and the beadle 10s.; at every baptism the schoolmaster should have 10s. and the beadle 6s.; while, of every uplifted pledge, the schoolmaster should have 6s., and of every fallen pledge 18s. I should notice here that the abuses which the Church Courts had to lament, in connection with marriages, were by no means confined to 'pyping.' The institution of 'Penny-weddings,' now happily exploded, or lingering merely in out-of-the-world places, was in great vogue in the seventeenth century. The name by which these gatherings are recorded, even in the Minutes of the Synod of Fife, is 'Penny-bridles;' and great were the abuses perpetrated by those who paid their penny for the night's amusement, and were determined to have their pennyworth of it. Acts were made by Presbyteries, and regulations were laid down by Justices of the Peace, to curb unruly proceedings at gatherings which could not well be entirely suppressed. At length, in 1643, the Presbytery of St. Andrews passed an Act restricting the number of persons present at them to twenty, and the number present at contracts and baptisms to six or seven; and this Act was extended by the Synod to the whole of Fife.

Let me give you now a few notices regarding the funerals

of the period. That some superstitious observances should have continued in connection with the burial of the dead, for a considerable time after the Reformation, is not to be wondered at, when we take into account the hold that such usages have on most minds, and especially the minds of the uneducated classes. A common superstition in Fife, at the time we allude to, was displayed in carrying the dead right round the church before interment. Another, which some of the most highly-educated ministers of the Church of England at the present day appear not to have got over, was burying unbaptized infants apart. There was legislation by the Synod of Fife regarding these superstitions as late as the year 1641; an Act of March 14th of that year ordaining 'that all these who superstitiouslie carries the dead about the Kirk before buriall, as also the burieing of of unbaptized bairnes apart, be taken notice of, and that the practiseris thereof be censured by the Sessioun.' But it was not entirely among the uneducated that these and similar superstitions lingered; for I find that, in 1650, the Synod took notice of some information they had received 'anent some superstitious rites usit in the buriall of the late Laird of Fordell;' and the Presbytery of Dunfermline were ordered to make inquiry regarding the matter.

The custom existed in Aberdour, as well as in Dalgety and other parishes in the neighbourhood, of intimating deaths orally, with the accompaniment of the beadle's hand-bell. This custom, indeed, lingered so long in the village that old people retain in their memory the form used on such occasions. After attention had been arrested by the ringing of the bell, intimation was made that such a one had died, at such a time, in accordance with the will of God; and when these words were uttered, the beadle's broad blue bonnet was reverently lifted. The early custom seems to have been to invite the inhabitants of the village to the funeral at the time the intimation of the death was made. It was also the very wise custom not to keep the dead very

long before burial. In 1698, the fee for ringing the hand-bell and making the grave was, for adults, 16s. Scots, and for children, 10s.

'Vast importance seems to have been attached to the use of the mortcloth in Aberdour; and, as the charge for the use of it was high, it must have largely helped to replenish the box. The latent feeling in the breasts of the inhabitants regarding the mortcloth tariff was that it should be resisted, as exorbitant; and this at length found such loud expression that a small civil war was raging about the matter in 1650. As a means of bringing down the rates, the tailors of Aberdour were public-spirited enough to get an opposition mortcloth made; and many and tough were the discussions between the Session and 'all the tailors,' ere the latter laid down their needles and came to terms. The tailors' mortcloth seems to have passed into the hands of the Session, who no doubt thought they were now masters of the situation. But in this they were mistaken. The ingenuity of the parishioners found a new channel, by getting the use of a mortcloth from another parish, at a lower rate. The Session, however, were not to be outgeneralled in this fashion, and they retaliated by enacting that no grave was to be dug until the assurance had been given that the parish mortcloth should be used! This was a master-stroke, and put an end to the war. In 1653 there were two mortcloths belonging to the parish,—one of velvet, and one of ordinary cloth.

The chancel, or 'queir' of the church, was used as a burying-place as late as the year 1652, when Mr. James Stewart was summoned before the Session for burying his father there, contrary to an Act of the General Assembly. This was an Act, passed in 1643, discharging 'all persons, of whatsoever qualitie, to burie any deceased person within the body of the Kirk, where the people meet for hearing of the Word, and administration of the Sacraments.' Mr. James pleaded in excuse 'his ignorance of the Act,' and

said he thought 'the queir was an isle belonging to the Earl of Murray, and not belonging to the Church.'

In 1674 it was enacted that all who put a headstone in the churchyard should pay 40s., and that all who had 'the meikle kirk-bell' rung should pay 40s.—both payments going to the poor. I wish some enactment had been made to prevent the appropriation of headstones by those who had no right to them. This was a quite common proceeding in Aberdour till very recently, and it has deprived us of much interesting information. By many, I have no doubt, this has been done without thought; and, where the stones were openly sold, it is not to be wondered at that they were readily bought. I have seen an account carefully written, and rendered by the Kirk-Session of the parish, for stones thus transferred to others. I wish it to be distinctly understood that the transaction is an illegal one, and I trust it will not be repeated.

There is a curious notice of a 'horologe' being put up in the churchyard. No doubt it was of the nature of a sundial, and would be useful in regulating the various ringings of the church-bell. In 1656 John Tod has agreed to give George Black a tree, for the purpose of having the horologe erected on it; and the work is to be gone about with all expedition. It is not, however, till 1659, that we know for a certainty that the work has been accomplished. In this year William Main gives in an account to the Kirk-Session 'for payment of the tree on which the horologe is.' But if William Main, by some lapse of memory, has become oblivious of the fact that the tree was made over freely by John Tod, the members of Session do not share in the blunder; and they give no heed to the claim, 'seeing the said tree was given *gratis* by John Tod.'

Before passing from the consideration of the labours of the Kirk-Session in such matters as have come before our notice, I may, in a sentence or two, say that it would be unfair to judge of these labours by present prevailing ideas.

Much that we have seen the members of Session occupied with would very properly, now-a-days, be considered beyond their province, and the mode in which they went about it would be thought inquisitorial. But an enlightened view of their labours is quite consistent with the opinion that they were not unsuited to the times in which they were put forth. The long reign of Popery had left the mass of the people ignorant and debased to a remarkable degree. Like the Israelites when they left the land of bondage, they carried about with them the marks of their long servitude; and a period of training of a peculiar kind was necessary ere they could be raised to a higher level. But the condition of things is very much altered now from what it was then; and with education and Christian principle pervading a people, they should no longer need to be held in leading-strings. What should be aimed at, on their part, is the wise self-restraint, which knowledge, going hand in hand with sound principle, should give. But, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that the exercise of Christian discipline has been imposed on the Church for all ages; and if the outwardly immoral were allowed to enter the membership of the Church, or continue in it unchecked, nothing but mischief could be the result.

We turn now to the state of education in the parish in the seventeenth century. Our Scottish Reformers made most vigorous efforts to advance the education of the people, by means of schools and colleges, as well as by the preaching of the Word. Indeed, schools and colleges were absolutely necessary, in order that the preaching of the Word might be perpetuated—schools, to prepare a people educated so as to understand and profit by what they hear, when the Word is preached; and colleges, to provide an educated ministry, without which the people will not be instructed as they ought to be. And but for the greedy barons of Scotland, who appropriated to their personal use funds given for a higher end, the cause of education might

have been in a far more advanced state in the seventeenth century. I regret to say that this parish fared fully as ill as any I know of, in regard to help from the proprietors, to advance the cause of education. During nearly thirty years—from 1650 till 1680—there are, from time to time, efforts made by the minister and elders to get a proper school and schoolmaster's house built; and yet, with the Earls of Morton and Moray at the head of the proprietors, it seems to have taken all these years to secure this simple yet most necessary equipment. Let me lay before you a few hurried notices bearing on the state of education, and the means provided for supplying it, during these thirty years. In March 1650 the building of a school is mooted, and the minister and elders are to make inquiry at the mason as to the probable cost of it. On the last day of April, as the Minute of Kirk-Session informs us, 'the Session appoynts ane meeting of the heritors within the parish of Aberdaure, together with the honest men there, concerning the building of ane school.' The 'beddel' was ordered to give notice of it; but, when the appointed day came round, the heritors 'were not well met,'—had not convened in sufficient number, and so the consideration of the matter was postponed till another day. The month of May comes round, and a meeting of the honest men is held in connection with the matter: and, 'being interrogat by the minister, whether they will haud hand to the doing and furthering of the same, they declared, with one voice, that they were most willing, both with means and paines.' Whereupon the Laird of Mains, Major Phin, Mr. James Stewart, and James Hume are appointed to 'consult what will build ane competent school.' The following month Laurence Coosing, the 'beddel,' is ordained 'to go abroad in the parish, and desire the honest people to bring some stones for the school.' Meanwhile the Session are busy in their endeavours to provide the means of a good education, by the time the school is ready. Mr.

Francis Hannay, the schoolmaster, is probably teaching in some temporary place. But the Session think it necessary that there should also be 'ane doctor.' This functionary, let me say, was not a surgeon or physician: the village, in all likelihood, enjoyed no such luxury at the time we speak of. The doctor, as the term is used here, was evidently what we would now call an assistant teacher; and as assistant teachers, even in those old days, had mouths, and shared the infirmity of the race to which they belonged in requiring clothing, 'the Session takes it to their consideration what should be his due and mentenance; and for that effect appoynts fiftie merks, which was wont to be given out of the penalties and pledges to the schoolmaster, before he had ane provision according to the Act of Parliament, now to be given yearly to the doctor; and more, appoynts that every scholar sould pay to the doctor fourtie pennies every quarter, by and attour the ten shillings to the master. And for his meat, they are to think upon ane way what voluntarilie every pleugh in the landwart will give, either in victuall or in moneyes, and see also what every honest man in the toune will give voluntarilie, year by year, for the advancing of so good ane work,'—a schoolmaster's Sustentation Fund, you will not fail to notice! The singular thing in this arrangement is that the doctor's food is the last thing to be provided for; one would naturally have expected it to be the first. The doctor was evidently got; for, about the close of the year, a committee is appointed, to consider what is to be done about the ingathering of the schoolmaster's stipend, and 'what is auchtand to the doctor.' At the beginning of the following year, it is complained that the Earl of Moray has not paid the schoolmaster's salary; but Mr. James Stewart, his chamberlain, agrees to pay it, on condition that the Earl's name be not heard in connection with the letters of horning that have been issued. Other heritors are evidently in fault as well as the Earl. The school-doctor seems to have fared no

better than the schoolmaster; for about the same time four elders are appointed, 'on each side of the burn,' to raise twenty pounds on each side, and this is 'to be done speedily, out of consideration for the doctor's necessitie.' In April 1652 the scholars were examined, after sermon, on a Tuesday. Certain elders had been appointed to be present, and the proficiency of the children was approved. In 1654 the school is yet unbuilt. But some money has been collected, through the town and parish, 'for the sogers'—in another place it is said to have been 'for Lawyer's Regiment;' and it is now proposed that this money, which has not been applied to the purpose for which it was raised, should be used in building the school. Another windfall comes in, in 1655. It appears that a collection of £200 had been made some time previously for Kelso—probably on account of the plague which ravaged the town in 1645; and the minister, at a meeting of Session, refers to a disagreeable rumour, that he has kept the money for his own use. He explains that the Synod, having ascertained that more than enough had been contributed for Kelso, had ordered the money collected in Fife to be applied to pious uses in the congregations where it had been raised. And Mr. Bruce shows that he has laid out the sum collected, 'and twice as much,' in the purchase of slates, lime, timber, and stones for the school. It seems to have been part of this store of lime and stones that Hugh Bailzie took in the way of loan. In June 1658 the schoolmaster complains that he cannot get his stipend in, and the Session are to do what they can to relieve him. During the following month they so far obtemper this resolution as to lend him twelve pounds, to keep body and soul together. In 1659, it is noticed that the schoolmaster can hardly live, he is so ill paid, and he again gets twelve pounds for his great need. In 1666 the laird of Mains gives his bond for £160, that should long ago have been put to the purpose of building a school. In September of the same year

there is a Minute in which the various efforts to build a school are referred to, and the difficulties that came in the way are recapitulated. The Session however are, probably for the hundredth time, resolved to delay no longer; and so the laird of Lundie is to be written to, that the money in his hands belonging to the Session will be required. Other outstanding debts are to be gathered in—the Session apparently having done a good stroke of business by money-lending; and those who borrowed 'the great jeists' are to be asked to restore them. This last-named matter probably refers to some additional loan that Hugh Bailzie, and others who have profited by his example, have been so obliging as to take. But, supposing that these same 'great jeists' have meanwhile been incorporated with the borrowers' buildings, as the stones and lime evidently have been, one cannot help wondering at the nature of the process by which they could be restored. At length, in 1681, we find the heritors decerned, by the Commissariat Court of the diocese of Dunkeld, in their several proportions, for erecting a school-house. So that, as I have already said, it took a thirty years' campaign to get the parish equipped with school buildings. This reflects little credit on the heritors of the parish, and is not very flattering to the public spirit of the community.

It must be admitted, however, that during all this time, in spite of the want of suitable school buildings, the Session were actively employed in securing the education of the young; and many were the cases of discipline that arose out of the neglect of parents to keep their children regularly at school. From time to time defaulters are summoned, and ordered to put their children to school, on pain of being ordered to 'come before the pulpit.' And it is not any paltry excuse, which a careless parent chooses to plead, that will satisfy the Session. Thus the Record tells us that 'Robert Peacock told some bad excuses for not putting his bairn to school, wherewith the Session wes not

well pleased.' Robert is accordingly ordered to put the bairn to school. In 1651 all children between five and fifteen years of age are ordered to be kept at school, 'according to the Act of the parish,' else their parents shall be proceeded against. And in 1653 it is enacted that those who send not their children to school shall be debarred from receiving any benefit of the Church; and this is appointed to be intimated from the pulpit. This 'Act of the parish' seems to have been of some standing, for, in January 1650, we have the following notice: 'The Session ordains John Anderson, in this town, to come before the pulpit the next Sabbath, and make satisfaction for disobeying the ordinance of the Session, and not putting his son to the school; and also to pay 20s., according to the ordinance thereof.' It is greatly to be regretted that any parents should require pressure in order to the performance of such a simple duty, which they owe, not merely to their children, but to the community at large. A good education, conjoined with a worthy example, is the working man's best legacy to his family, and they are cruel and unnatural parents who withhold it.

Sometimes, in those old days, as now, foolish stories of ill-usage received at the hands of the schoolmaster were propagated. The Session, in such cases, investigated the cause of complaint with great promptness and impartiality. Thus on March 5, 1650, we have the following Minute: 'The quhilk day compeared James Kirkland for ane manifest ly, quhilk he spake in face of the Session, in saying that the Master strak the bairns until they were not able to sturre; for the quhilk cause he was shairply rebooked by the Session, and certified, if ever he did the like again, he suld be punished publiquly and examplarily.' Mr. Francis Hannay was schoolmaster from the time when the Session Record begins till 1669. Of his general qualifications I have already spoken. Of his spouse, Jean Dickson, I know only the name. Mr. Walter Anderson succeeded

Mr. Hannay in office in 1669. An important qualification of the schoolmasters of those and much later times was a good voice and some knowledge of music, as the 'dominie' was usually precentor as well. So Mr. Anderson, before he could be duly installed, or even considered an eligible candidate, had to show what his attainments in this department were. Having given satisfaction on this score, he was now open to election for schoolmaster. But the question came then to be, by what method the election was to proceed, so as to test his possession of other needed qualifications. Some thought it best not to admit any one to the office 'without a dispute'—that is, a competition—while others, in their turn, 'thought this ridiculous.' Those who were in favour of 'the dispute' were left in the minority; and Mr. Walter Anderson was chosen, subject to the approval of the Presbytery. The Presbyterial examination was gone through satisfactorily; and Mr. Anderson was elected for a year, at the end of which time he might be re-elected, or his services dispensed with, according as he gave satisfaction or not. Mr. Charles M'Kinnon was Mr. Anderson's successor. He was schoolmaster in 1676; and in May 1681 we have the following notice of him: 'This day the schoolmaster intimate to the Session that, seeing it hath pleased God that he hath gotten a call to the ministrie, and is now upon his trialls in order to that holy function, and likewise hath a special command from my Lord Archbishop of St. Andrews to preach as often as possibly he can, at the church of Orwell, to which he is now presented by the Right Hon. Sir William Bruce of Balcaskie—that therefore he cannot get his charge attended, and demits the same.' Mr. M'Kinnon became minister of Orwell on the 7th of September 1681; and Dr. Hew Scott tells us that he was 'deprived by the Privy Council, 29th August 1689, for not reading the Proclamation of the Estates, and not praying for their Majesties William and Mary, but for the restoration of King James, and confusion

to his enemies; not observing the thanksgiving, and not reading the Proclamation for the Collection.' Mr. M'Kinnon, it thus appears, was a very pronounced Jacobite. The next schoolmaster of whom we have any notice was Mr. Alexander Christie, whom we find in office down to the close of the century.

We have hitherto been confining our attention to the parish school; but it is evident that there were several dame schools in Aberdour in those days. Thus, in May 1650, Laurence Coosing, the beddel, is 'ordained to go to the west end of the town, and discharge all schools over which women hes charge;' from which it appears that it was in the Wester village these dame schools were found. In 1661, an exception to this ordinance is made in favour of the school taught by Margaret and Jean Paton, daughters of Mr. William Paton, formerly minister of the parish. But a rule is laid down by the Session, which is strictly to be observed by these ladies: 'No lads are to be sent to any but the parish school; but the schoolmaster is willing to overlook lasses going to the school kept by Marg^{t} and Jean Paton.' In July 1697 it was enacted that no women teach male children, within the parish, further than the Catechism, under the penalty of ten pounds Scots. The Catechism was thus a school-book in those days—the Shorter Catechism, no doubt.

Regarding the management of the poor I must say a little, ere passing on to themes which will be more interesting to the younger portion of my audience at least. The great reservoir from which the poor drew their supplies was that wonderful institution,—the Box. The funds that flowed into this receptacle came from various sources. The ordinary church-door collections—which from 1670 till 1680 averaged about two pounds Scots weekly—formed a perennial feeder. Forfeited pledges helped to swell the amount; while fines, and gifts bestowed at contracts of marriage, and mortcloth dues, and payment for headstones

in the churchyard, and legacies bequeathed for behoof of the poor, were so many tributaries. Then, as regards the outflow from this reservoir, the ordinary poor were the first to have their wants considered and met. Their number does not seem to have been great. But this is one of the points on which the Session Record of Dalgety is more explicit than that of Aberdour. When Mr. Donaldson became minister of Dalgety there were only three persons on the list of paupers. They received twelve shillings Scots each, on the first Sabbath of the month. On the month on which the Communion took place this rate was doubled, as it seems also to have been when sickness supervened. It does not appear how many poor persons there were in the parish of Aberdour, at the time with which we are dealing. But it is evident that the Kirk-Session thought the number sufficiently large; for when John Barr made his appearance in the parish in 1665, he was ordered 'to go out of it when the weather grew fair,' as there were 'enow o' poor folk alreadie.' The paupers wore blue gowns, as appears from a Minute of June 1660, in which it is stated that the elders were appointed to make inquiry 'what poor ones need bluegounes.'

Repairs on the fabric of the church were paid for out of the Box, till 'a stent' was laid on the parish. Some of the accounts for repairs are curious. Thus, in April 1652, the slater's account for pointing the church—eleven roods and a half in all—came to £23 Scots; but then there is the *addendum* 'for drink-money, £3, 13s. 8d.,' rather large proportion, it seems to us! But masons and wrights in those days claimed the same perquisite. Even when a new pulpit was got for Mr. Donaldson of Dalgety, the Session Record bears that there was a considerable allowance for 'drink-money.' Out of the capacious Box of the parish of Aberdour came also Presbytery and Synod dues, and a yearly sum of nine pounds for the Presbytery bursar. And wights in distress, because of want of money,

who could get no relief in other quarters, applied from time to time, and in many cases not in vain, for aid from the Box. Thus, in 1655, James Hutton owes the terrible Hugh Bailzie, whose acquaintanceship we have already made, a debt of eight pounds, being the price of a musket, and James is in danger of 'horning' for this debt. Hugh is willing to let him off for four pounds; but, if this sum is not forthcoming, he declares he will proceed to extreme measures. The Session evidently believe that Hugh will keep his word; and so, laying James's case to heart, they advance the four pounds, and he is 'to pay it when he is able.' On another occasion we find the Session lending five pounds to Andrew Robertson, 'to help him to effectuate some business quhilk is in agitation before the Parliament.' I may mention in a sentence, further, that the year 1651 brought with it great suffering to the poor; and in 1659 there is a notice of some persons shut up on suspicion of being infected by the pestilence at Over Balmule, near John Stevenson's house. These poor people, and many others in similar plights, had their wants supplied by the Session.

Permit me now to give you some hasty notices of the Trades carried on in the parish in those days. In 1658 the seamen of Aberdour are so important a class that they lay a proposal before the Session to erect a loft for themselves 'above the entry into the bodie of the church, beneath the pend.' The Session approve of this proposal, as there is a want of accommodation in the church; and they think the scholars may be accommodated in the seamen's loft, evidently pointing to the loft at that time used by the seamen, but which had become too small for them. Five years after this the proposal is again before the Session; but whether it was carried into effect or not I cannot say. The notice is interesting, as showing the number of seamen at that time belonging to Aberdour. There is a notice of coals shipped at the harbour as early

as 1672, and this occurs in connection with a quarrel between Malcolm M'Mair and Andrew Coosing about the prior right to a berth at the harbour. A few years later James Cuik and William Aitken are before the Session, charged with 'loosing their barks' on a Sabbath to go with coals to Leith. I have already noticed, in another connection, that during the long vacancy which existed between Mr. Litster's death and Mr. Cumming's settlement, this form of Sabbath profanation was disgracefully prevalent. There are notices of 'Fordell Heuch,' or coal-pit, and 'Mains Heuch,' nearly as early as the beginning of the Session Record in 1649.

Brewing, as many notices have already shown, was a common branch of trade in the village in those days, and the same persons who brewed the ale sold it. No one need be at any loss to count how many breweries once existed in the place, if he is but at pains to visit the beautifully built wells that still remain to tell the tale. One of these, in the lane that branches off the main street in the Easter village, and leads to the Murrel (the Moorhill), is a good specimen of the others, several of which, I am assured, have been filled up. Ale was almost the only beverage used at that time. But in 1658 Robert Ruich appears before the Session, accusing Marjorie Wilson of saying that his spouse was 'one of the wifes that helped to drink so much *aqua vitæ*.' But not only was *aqua vitæ* drunk, it was distilled as well, at an early date in the village; for in June 1664 there is an incidental reference in the Minutes to 'the brewhouse where they brew the *aqua vitæ*.'

Then salt-making was evidently carried on in the village, for in 1699 Robert Rae, salter, is called before the Session for having his salt-pan going on Sabbath. Wherever a well in the place goes by the name of 'the Panney Well,' there, we may be sure, a salt-pan was once at work.

The weavers were an important class in Aberdour as

early as the year 1658, for in that year Alexander Gib appeared before the Session in name and on behalf of the rest of the 'websters,' requesting permission to 'put up a pew or two under the west loft.' The Session grant permission 'to put up two pews for the said craft, provyding that they put them up in a decent way.' Towards the close of the century the weavers were evidently a numerous class in the parish. I shall have something to say at a later stage regarding the number of weavers found at work at the close of the eighteenth century. It is only lately that John Seath's hand-loom, the last of the whole number that ever clicked in our village, has become silent, and been taken to pieces.

Of the millers, and 'all the tailors,' I have already spoken; and of the cordiners, or shoemakers, I shall have something to say at a later period. Carters and quarriers, too, have crossed our path. The freestone quarry was that at Cullelo, the product of which was, at a later time, used extensively for building purposes in Edinburgh; and during the eighteenth century extensive quarrying went on at the Hallcraig, the trap-rock there being cut into blocks, which were taken to pave the streets of London. In 1656 Mr. Bruce took advantage of some masons passing through the town to get a window opened under Lord Morton's loft in the church, as the people complained that 'it was only a hole to sleep in.' Evidently there were no resident masons in the place at that time. I may mention that there is a reference in the Minutes to a wind-mill that stood between Dalgety and Aberdour.

References to places in old documents are always interesting. The earliest notices of the Hallcraig—which I have lately had occasion to name—show, by the invariable mode of spelling the word, how mistaken they are who spell it, or think of it, as the 'Hawkcraig' or 'Hawk's Crag.' It is the Hallcraig, shortened usually into Ha' Craig—the rock

belonging to or near the Hall, or manor-house of Lord Morton. True to the instincts of their age, boys resorted to it more than two hundred years ago, to rob nests; and there are other allusions to it, sometimes under the name of 'the Craig.'

The beautiful yellow whin covered the Braefoot in those days, and it seems to have been a place of common resort by the people. The sloping bank called 'the Heughs,' lying along the sea-side path leading to Burntisland, was then unplanted and covered over with whins. This probably we might not have known, if John Flooker had not drunk too much ale at Burntisland, and thus created the necessity for his poor wife to go in search of him with a lantern. The object of her search, we regret to say, was found 'lying among the whins, betwixt and Burntisland.' The links of Aberdour are frequently referred to, but never in such a definite way as to make me quite sure of their locality. The probability, however, is that they skirted Whitesands Bay. Every time they are mentioned it is in connection with some superstitious observances at Yuletide—the great heathen festival that had Christmas engrafted on it. On one occasion we find John Stewart, Andrew Robertson, and various others, charged with being 'down on the linkes' at Yule, and charged 'not to do the like again.' One could wish that the Minute had been fuller on such an occasion. That superstitious observances connected with Yule were common in Fife as late as the year 1649 is obvious from the following Minute of Synod, of April 4th of that year: 'The Assemblie appointis the several Presbitries to enquyre in thair boundis, quhat superstitioun is used in observing of Yuile day, and accordinglie to censure the samen; and to advyse what effectuall course may be taken for suppressing thairof in tym coming.'

When speaking of holidays, I may say that there are various notices of 'Handsel Monday,' and the 'Market day,' in the Minutes; and the instances in which drunken-

ness and riot are connected with them are very rare indeed. One or two of these notices may be referred to. When John Flooker's wife, by the aid of her lantern, found her bibulous husband 'among the whins, betwixt and Burnt-island,' it was at Handsel Monday time, in the year 1658. John was, however, a notorious character; and little did he suspect that, after the lapse of more than two centuries, his sleep on that memorable night would be so sharply criticised. Then in January 1674 six persons are cited before the Session, for being drunk and disorderly at Handsel Monday time; some of them striking each other, as the Minute has it, 'both with foot and hand.' These are, however, so far as I recollect, the only cases of the kind. And much the same may be said regarding the market-day, which, you may remember, I have shown to be St. Columba's Day—the day of the patron saint of the Monastery in our immediate neighbourhood. There are many indications of business going on, in buying and selling, on the market-day; as indeed it was of old a great time for trading in various kinds of wares, brought to the place, as well as manufactured in it, and exposed for sale on stands. But very few abuses seem to have been connected with it in the olden time, although in recent times some have crept in, and are countenanced by interested parties for their own gain and the public loss. For the credit of our fine old town—for although it has now shrunk into the proportions of a village, it was, in the olden days with which we are dealing, not merely a town, but two burghs, one of barony and the other of regality, united—for the credit of our town, let the respectable inhabitants give no countenance to these abuses, introduced by a few who have little or no character to lose. Let me not be supposed to be an enemy to holidays rightly enjoyed, and amusements which can afford to be looked back upon without regret. From my heart I wish the working man had more of them, and that amusements of a rational kind could be made to take the

place of those that, in the judgment of all intelligent men, are both irrational and hurtful.

While speaking of amusements I may refer to some of the games which are incidentally referred to in the Session Record. It is mentioned, in rather a strange connection, that one of the games played out-of-doors was 'Barley-breaks.' This was a game somewhat akin to that of 'Hide-and-seek,' played among the stacks of a farm-yard, in which I suppose some of those now hearing me have indulged, in the happy days of childhood. But the remarkable thing, in the case to which I allude, is that it was on a Sabbath this game was played, by seven young women belonging to the parish, in 1650. And what makes the incident stranger still, is the circumstance that it was on a Communion Sabbath, and at least two of the young women had that day been at the Lord's Table. Our first thought in connection with such a case is that surely Mr. Bruce had not been at sufficient pains to instruct these young women in the doctrines and duties of the Christian faith. But indeed, what minister is there, even in these later days, who has admitted young people to the membership of the Church, who has not been grieved by the misbehaviour of some of them!

Another game referred to in the same incidental way, is that of 'ballots,' as it is called in the Minutes, but more correctly 'bullets.' From inquiries which I have made, I believe this game has lingered longer in the West of Scotland than in Fife. The mode of playing it is this:—Two persons, or parties, furnished each with a metal ball, or bullet, as large as can with ease be grasped by the hand, try, by alternate throws, in how many runs along a public road a certain distance can be accomplished, and the side that covers the distance in the fewest throws is victor. It requires a sharp eye and a steady hand, as well as considerable tact and strength of muscle, to run such a bullet along

the highway for a few hundred yards; for sometimes, meeting with an obstruction, it is brought to a dead stand, or it goes off at a tangent and disappears through a hedge. And the avoidance or overcoming of these and similar difficulties so as to reach the goal, or 'hail,' in the fewest number of throws, demands both strength and skill. It is not to be regretted that this game has disappeared, as it was fraught with inconvenience, and even danger, to foot-passengers. This then is the game that John Anderson has been taking part in, on the evening of some fine sunny day, in June 1650, when the roads were just in such a condition as to offer least resistance to the swiftly rolling bullet. But John is evidently a foolish sort of fellow; for, as he returns from his sport, about nine o'clock in the evening, he adjourns to a public-house, and as a natural result of this, he becomes hilarious, and indulges in sundry knocks at the doors of peaceable townspeople who have retired to rest. The consequence of all this folly is that John's freaks come to the ears of the Kirk-Session,—ears which, as we have already seen, were kept wide open, and had many avenues leading to them—and the bullet-player comes to grief.

There are curious notices in the Record of playing on the ice, and 'night-waiking,' and practical jokes of various kinds, not always pleasant to those on whom they were played; and which, like the boomerang, came back to the hand that played them off—in the shape of an interview with the Kirk-Session. But the patience, even of an Aberdour audience listening to stories of their own neighbourhood, has its limits, and these and other themes must meanwhile be passed over in silence.

The men and women whose actions have come before us in this lecture have all passed away. The ministers, the elders, the people,—noblemen and peasants alike—are sleeping in the dust, and their spirits have gone to God

who gave them. So will it be with us too, ere long. Let us then strive to live in such a way that our influence, at whatever time traced, and by whomsoever, may be found to have been on the side of what is true and good. Then life shall have been worth living, and death, to borrow the motto of Robert Blair's tombstone, shall be to us the Gate of Life.

LECTURE XI.

Superstitions prevalent in the neighbourhood in the seventeenth century—Definition of the term—Superstition vanishing before knowledge—Mirage—'Death-tick' and 'death-warning'—Ecclesiastical miracles—Superstition of Dark and Middle Ages chargeable against the Roman Catholic Church—Witchcraft, how accounted for—The sin of the profession of it, and the crime against society—Belief in witchcraft wellnigh universal in seventeenth century—A bishop consulting a witch—The Earl of Angus refusing to do so—King James's treatise on Demonology—Mr. Bruce's incumbency the great period of witch-burning in Aberdour—Case of Janet Anderson—The 'Brodder' and his needles—Margaret Cant's case—Heroic resolution of the Kirk-Session—Accusations against Margaret Currie, Catharine Robertson, and Janet Bell—Lord Morton's interference—Delation by dying witches—Susanna Alexander thus accused—Instruments of torture had recourse to in some places—'Casting up' the sins of the dead—Bessie Lamb accuses Elspeth Kirkland of the crime of bewitching with a 'hairn tedder'—Pretended divination by 'riddle and shears,' and 'key and Bible'—Superstition traced to London!—Mr. Francis Hannay's mode of proving a woman guilty of child-murder—Superstitions in the neighbouring parish of Inverkeithing—Mr. Walter Bruce of Inverkeithing a great witch-finder—Case of Robert Small—Sad case of the lady of Pittadro—Wife-keeping *versus* witch-burning—Cases in Burntisland.

I AM to call your attention in this lecture to the superstitions which prevailed in our neighbourhood in the seventeenth century; and a few sentences of an explanatory kind are necessary, ere we enter on the subject. The theme is rather an unusual one for a popular lecture, but I have the conviction that, if properly handled, it may prove not only interesting but instructive as well.

What is Superstition? I would be inclined to define it as a state of mind that ascribes to supernatural causes what may be sufficiently accounted for by those that are natural.

That supernatural causes have been at work in the creation of the world, and are at work still, all around us, no wise man will venture to deny; and the wildest superstition is not half so foolish as the denial of supernatural causes. But, on the other hand, that there are laws, by which the Great Creator regulates the events that occur all around us, is just as certain; and it is only ignorance that can suppose such events occurring without an established order. There are phenomena which can only be accounted for by the direct intervention of a supernatural cause. Such was the creation of matter; but there are events which can be sufficiently accounted for by laws, which the Creator has imprinted on His works. Such, for instance, is the phenomenon of thunder, which is caused by the discharge of electricity. It will at once be seen, then, that ignorance of these laws, or an imperfect acquaintance with them, will lead to a vast amount of superstition. Events will, in that case, be continually occurring which men cannot account for in a rational way; and they will be sure to account for them in some way, however irrational. Let me explain, by an illustration or two, what I mean. Benvenuto Cellini, the celebrated Italian artist, gives us in his Autobiography an account of a number of demons, which he says he once saw, chasing one another, with wonderful rapidity, amidst a circle of light. But there can be little doubt that these demons were of the very harmless kind which we have frequently seen projected from a magic lantern. That there are such beings as evil spirits, every man who believes his Bible knows; but they had nothing to do with the gambols that so alarmed the credulous Italian. He did not know a natural cause adequate to produce such appearances; and so he accounted for them on supernatural grounds. Similar to this was the superstition connected with a strange figure that used to terrify travellers among the Hartz Mountains in Germany; and which went by the name of the 'Giant of the Brocken.' This very innocent giant is now known to be

neither more nor less than the image of the person who happens to be on the top of the mountain at sunrise; so that the fear of it was really a case of people being frightened at their own shadow. And the strange appearances produced by mirage, whether on land or at sea, and whether in the form of temples and palaces in the air, or ships inverted or raised out of the water—which last we have seen more than once in our Firth—are well known to be the effect of the refractive power of the atmosphere, without the least aid from genii or spirits of the deep. So, too, with the 'death-tick,' which has so often kept old wives, of both sexes, awake and palpitating during midnight hours; and yet, after all, is due to a harmless little wood-worm, into whose head it never enters, that it is capable of terrifying or even disturbing anybody. And the 'death-warning,' as it is called, which comes like the lash of a whip against the door, is neither more nor less than some part of the furniture or other wood-work of the room cracking in dry weather. In all these cases it will readily be seen that man is the dupe of his own ignorant fancy. And it is a very easy process to invest a fellow-man with more than human power, when he is connected with incidents which cannot easily be accounted for in any other way. Thus St. Columba got the credit of doing wonders on Inchcolme and its surrounding waters, in the way of extinguishing conflagrations, and keeping his friends afloat, and sending his enemies to the bottom of the sea, to an extent, I am sure, the good man would never have approved of, had he been consulted on the matter. But the mischief is that the saints, who are reputed to have wrought such wonders, seldom have been consulted about them. They have generally been devised after the reputed workers were dead; and dead bones have always been more remarkable for their powers than living ones, in Romish legends.

But when, from such cases as those we have enumerated, we pass to those in which designing men have pretended to

" What silly notions crowd the clouded mind,
That is, thro' want of education blind!"
The Gentle Shepherd
Act V Sc. 1

possess a power which they had not; and have, for selfish ends, practised their craft on the simple-minded and the ignorant, we reach a form of superstition more akin to that which is chiefly to engage our attention in this lecture. That many of the wonderful legends, and so-called miracles, of the Middle Ages were the merest devices of wicked and designing men, we no more doubt than we do that the liquefaction of St. Januarius' blood at Naples, in the present day, is the merest juggle that priestcraft ever played off on the ignorance of its votaries. The superstition of the Middle Ages is, no doubt, to be traced to the gross ignorance of the period. 'And how,' it may be asked, 'are we to account for that of the seventeenth century, in our own country?' We trace it also, to a large extent, to ignorance. It is, we fear, seldom considered by those who deal with this and cognate questions, how short a period elapsed between the Reformation period in Scotland, and the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was a period of only forty years. Within that time, considering the depth of ignorance in which the people had been kept, and the small number of Reformed ministers whose services were available, not much could be achieved in the way of instructing and elevating the people. The work of lowering a nation in the scale of intelligence is always easy; but the task of raising them to a higher level is beset with many hindrances. We therefore charge the superstition of the seventeenth century to a large extent against the religious system which for so many previous centuries kept the great mass of the inhabitants of our country in such gross ignorance. We have only to place the most thoroughly Protestant countries of the present day alongside of the most slavishly Catholic, to justify our charge. The diffusion of Protestant light is the surest way to expel superstition.

The most remarkable of the superstitions of the seventeenth century was what went by the name of witchcraft; and to this our attention will mainly be directed, although

other forms will also be noticed. That there was such a crime as witchcraft known in very ancient times, is undoubted; and however great the difficulties may be, with which the subject is beset, they are no greater than those which surround the question of demoniacal possession. And although much of what is spoken of as witchcraft, in our version of the Bible, may be simply resolved into wicked attempts to deceive others, this will by no means explain all. We have, however, seen nothing to induce the belief that the witchcraft of the seventeenth century was anything more than a mixture of wickedness, ignorance, and credulity. There was wickedness on the part of those who professed to have dealings of a certain kind with Satan; there was ignorance on the part of those who believed that supernatural power was possessed by the persons who claimed it; and credulity on the part of those who, looking with any degree of care at what reputed witches and warlocks ever accomplished, saw anything in it that could not be accounted for on natural grounds.

There is, however, another view of the matter that ought not to be lost sight of. For any one even to seek to have dealings with the Wicked One, saying to evil, 'Be thou my good,' is one of the deepest and most daring sins than can be committed. And that many, who suffered during the seventeenth century, sought to do this, and by their own confession did this, to secure some selfish and often some vicious end, cannot be doubted. Indeed, cases are recorded in which the accused persons had written an agreement in their own blood, resigning themselves to Satan. And if reputed witches thus put the Evil One in the place of the Only Good, most certainly they who consulted such persons aided and abetted them in their wickedness. And as the crime, thus committed, amounted to idolatry—avowedly putting another being in the room of God—we need not wonder that, in any age when it was considered the duty of the civil magistrate to punish idolatry with death, there was

the clearest opinion that convicted witches should be capitally punished. Of course we do not vindicate this opinion; although we believe that the profession of witchcraft is a crime that should be punished by the civil magistrate; because, to take no higher ground, it amounts to fraud in the form of raising money, or acquiring goods, on false pretences. And it may be questioned whether the laws that treat blasphemy as a crime against society do not, in principle, apply to professing witchcraft as well.

It will thus be seen that the men of the seventeenth century, who proceeded with such rigour against so-called witchcraft, were not entirely without something to say for themselves. They erred, we think, in considering that the witchcraft of their times had any supernatural element in it; and they erred in proceeding to such extremes in the way of punishment. But these were, to a large extent, the faults of the time, and we should look with some degree of leniency on them, especially when we find them associated with such splendid virtues as, in other departments, adorned the annals of the period.

The belief in witchcraft as supernatural, like a wave, swept over nearly the whole of Europe during the Middle Ages; and amidst much that is reprehensible in Michelet's book, *La Sorcière*, it must be admitted that he has adduced good reason for the opinion that witchcraft was, in essence, a revolt against the feudal and priestly tyranny of those days, and against the religion from which it seemed to spring. The churchmen and nobles of the time, as a rule, so thoroughly oppressed the peasantry and others, and made their lives intolerable—and this under the guise of religion—that the oppressed people, in many instances, revolted against the system which tolerated such cruelties, and transferred their allegiance to Satan. It is a terrible theory, but seemingly a true one. Confining our attention to our own country and the seventeenth century, it may be said that the belief in witchcraft, as supernatural, was

common to all ranks and classes. King, lords and commons, statesmen and ecclesiastics, all shared in it. King James the Sixth wrote a book against the crime. The legislators of the country enacted laws against it. Ecclesiastics were busily engaged in examining those who were reputed to be guilty of it. Nor can it be said, with any degree of truth, that Episcopalians differed from Presbyterians in their estimate of it. The examination and burning of witches went on during the Episcopal periods of the history of the Scottish Church with unabated promptness and activity. The superstition was in no sense peculiar to Scotland, but prevailed elsewhere to as great, if not a greater, extent.

A few paragraphs, showing the hold which witchcraft had on the mind of the nation, will pave the way for incidents connected with our own neighbourhood. This, indeed, is necessary, in order to prove how widespread the reign of the superstition was. It is gravely related by some of our early historians, regarding Mary Queen of Scots, that witches, both in England and Scotland, had predicted, that if her marriage with Darnley should take place before the end of July 1565, great good would come of it to both realms; but if it should be delayed beyond that time, it would be productive of evil. That such a thing should have been deemed worthy of being recorded in grave histories, is a striking proof of the importance attached to such silly and impious utterances. The marriage was celebrated before the date mentioned, but whether this was arranged out of deference to the witches' weird I cannot say. It is also recorded, and at the time was evidently believed, that Patrick Adamson, Bishop of St. Andrews, had consulted a witch, in reference to a disease under which he had long laboured. It is even asserted that he set the woman free from her imprisonment in the Castle of St. Andrews, as a reward for the relief she had given him, but that she was apprehended and burned a few years after-

wards. If a person of the Bishop's learning and position gave such countenance to an ignoble superstition, we may wonder the less at poor and illiterate people consulting witches.

Those who have made themselves acquainted with the political intrigues that were carried on at the Scottish Court about the year 1585, will recollect that a rather unusual personage figures in them, under the name of 'Kate the witch.' It appears that she was hired by the anti-English party to utter railing accusations against Queen Elizabeth. But those who hired Kate would evidently not have been at pains to do so, if her reputation as a witch had not, in the estimation of the people, lent some force to what she said. A few years later we have a remarkable illustration of the power this dark superstition had over the minds of the higher and more educated classes. In 1588 the Earl of Angus, an excellent nobleman, who was greatly beloved, and went by the name of the 'Good Earl,' was afflicted with severe illness. The nature of his disease seems to have baffled the skill of his physicians, and it came to be believed that he was bewitched. In reading the account of his symptoms, I have no doubt it was a case of pulmonary consumption—his Lordship being afflicted with heavy perspirations. These symptoms were, however, at the time, accounted for on the supposition that witches were turning a wax image of the poor nobleman slowly before the fire. This was a favourite mode with the witches of those days, when they wished to torment any one. An image of wax or clay was made, representing in the rudest way some person or animal, and then whatever ill-usage the image got, the person or animal represented keenly felt. Thus an image of clay stuck full of pins gave intense pain to what it represented; and an image in wax turned before the fire gave rise to perspirations and scorching pain. A notorious wizard, Richard Graham, was brought by friends of the Earl's to see him, and offered to cure him; but

Spotswood tells us that when the sick nobleman heard that Graham professed to be a consulter of spirits, he would on no account admit him, declaring 'that his life was not so dear to him, as, for the continuance of it some years, he would be beholden to any of the devil's instruments; that he held his life of God, and was willing to render the same at His good pleasure, knowing he should change it for a better.' This was an instance of noble principle shining through the mist of superstition.

I have referred to King James's efforts to enlighten the public mind on the subject of witchcraft, and have spoken of the treatise on Demonology which our British Solomon gave to the admiring age which he believed he so much adorned. But you may not all be aware that his Majesty had some reason to adduce for cherishing a grudge against witches. When he was returning from Denmark with his newly-wedded queen, it was with the greatest difficulty the royal pair reached their kingdom. It was not for a moment to be supposed that natural causes should raise a storm at sea, when King James did it the honour of trusting his distinguished person on its surface. King Canute may have seen through the folly of supposing that the waves of the sea would respect him more than any ordinary mortal, but King James reigned with more absolute authority; and was it not to be expected that, under his sway, the very waves should learn to be obedient? It must, then, have been some supernatural power, of a malign kind, that raised the storm; in short, it must have been the work of witches. Strangely enough, a number of reputed witches were laid hold of and brought to trial for this storm. Many of them confessed that they had met for wicked practices at the kirk of North Berwick; and Mr. John Feane, the schoolmaster of Saltpreston, confessed that he had met with many persons there, chiefly women, and that their meetings had been for lewd purposes. He and various others were executed for the part they took in that matter.

These general notices of the superstitions prevalent in the country in those early days will have prepared you for a statement regarding similar incidents occurring in our own neighbourhood. And permit me at this point to say that, unless I believed the narrative I am now to lay before you fitted to convey important practical lessons, I would not have been at the pains to wade through the original documents, in which the materials I have collected for it are laid up.

It is to be regretted that we have not fuller information of the cases of reputed witchcraft in Aberdour, at the time when this superstition was at its height. But we have as much as enables us to form a pretty fair opinion of the nature of such cases. The great period for witch-burning in Aberdour was during the incumbency of Mr. Robert Bruce, and he seems to have gone very thoroughly into the business, in the early part of his ministry more especially. The first of the witches of whom we have authentic accounts were burned in the year 1649. In the Acts of the Scottish Parliament, under the date 5th July 1649, we have a notice of a commission granted for administering justice upon witches in the parish of Aberdour. How many suffered death it is impossible to say; but, beyond a doubt, there were several. One of the first Minutes of Kirk-Session has reference to the appointment of a meeting, 'to put an end to matters concerning witches that have already been burned;' and also to consult about those whom the Session thought fit to apprehend. From this Minute it also appears that the two bailies of Aberdour—Robert Logan, acting for Lord Morton, and a person whose name is all but obliterated—probably Mr. James Stewart of Mains, acting for Lord Moray—are fully employed, in connection with this grave matter. We have full details of the cases that were afterwards dealt with; and it will make our task in relating these all the more pleasant, that we shall not be horrified with detailed descriptions of cases ending with burning.

On the 14th of May 1650, Janet Anderson presents herself before the Session with a bill, in which it is declared that Isobel Inglis and Marjorie Flooker have called her a witch. She craves that the Session will investigate the matter; and names Andrew Kellock and his wife, Andrew Russell, Isobel Maxwell, and Christian Seggie, as persons who were witnesses to the accusation. The Session appoints these witnesses to be summoned on an early day. The two women who made the accusation are also cited; and the elders are, meanwhile, to do what they can to discover evidence bearing on the case. The appointed day arrives, and the reputed witch and her accusers confront one another, before Mr. Bruce and the other members of the Kirk-Session. The whole story, it appears, has originated in connection with the death of a little child. It is averred that Janet Anderson, coming into the house where Andrew Kellock's child lay in its cradle, put a mitten under its head; and the conclusion drawn by her accusers is that, by so doing, she bewitched the child, and caused its death. The witnesses are all put upon oath. Marjorie Flooker depones that she found Janet Anderson's mitten under the child's head after its death, and that she took the said mitten and cast it on the ground. Isobel Inglis depones that she took the mitten, when it was lying on the floor, and cast it into the fire. And she says she wondered exceedingly that Janet Anderson did not return to seek her mitten, for she was well known to be such a hard woman, that 'if she had lost the value of a pin-head, she would have returned to seek it.' Isobel thinks, therefore, there must have been something 'uncanny' about the mitten, that its owner did not come back to seek for it. Isobel further declares that, when Janet Anderson knew that her mitten was burned, she said, 'What misters [necessitates] the mitten to be burned, after the bairn is dead: for, if there had been any ill in the mitten, it was past before the death of the bairn.' Other witnesses corroborate this evidence;

and Andrew Kellock and his wife depone that Janet Anderson told them, that on the very day that Robert Anderson got himself hurt, he had called her 'a trumpous [cross-tempered] witch,' and her heart 'sythed' [glowed with satisfaction] when she saw him coming home in his hurt condition, holding his injured arm 'as if it had been a fiddle.' Still further, it was deponed that James Murray had declared that as he was going from Aberdour to Whitehill one night, he heard 'ane great guleing voice and dinne, in the hollow of the gait be southold Couras Aiker [the Cross-acre],' which greatly astonished him. But James, it appears, was somewhat ahead of his time, and was not to be deterred from investigation even by 'ane great guleing voice.' So he heroically advanced; and what, think you, did he see? Nothing less than Janet Anderson, on her knees, scraping the ground with both her hands, and uttering the most unearthly cries. He asked her what moved her to do this, and she replied that she could not tell. In addition to all this evidence, William Watson depones that, after Janet was delated to the Session, she said, in his house, 'it might be that her spirit zeid [went] forth out of her when she did not know of it.'

Now this is about as full and well-defined a case of the reputed witchcraft of the time as we have met with. These witnesses evidently believe that this old woman is a witch; and her purpose is more than half served when she gets her neighbours to believe that she possesses, or is in league with, malign supernatural power. A bad-hearted old woman she evidently is, seeing her heart glowed with satisfaction at the injury of her neighbour. And the night-scene near the 'Cross-acre' seems to point to that lowest deep in the so-called witchcraft of the time, an attempt at devil-worship, in which case her ignorance was more than matched by her wickedness. Moreover, in the admission made, in William Watson's house, that it might be her spirit went forth of her when she did not know of it, there appears a disposition, on

Janet's part, to encourage the idea that, in some way or other, she possesses supernatural power, or is in a very special way under its influence. It probably did not require much effort on her part to leave the impression on the minds of her neighbours, that she might be abroad at night in an 'uncanny' way; for it was at the time generally believed that, among other privileges enjoyed by witches, they had the power of transforming themselves into a variety of shapes, so that sometimes they were seen scampering through the fields in the form of hares, and at other times prowling about in the shape of cats—especially black ones. We all know, too, what wonderful journeys they performed through the air, seated on broomsticks; and how they sometimes went to sea in a sieve, and so could afford to laugh at the danger of springing a leak. I have myself conversed with an old woman who accounted for the lameness of an ancient crone, whom she had in her childhood seen, by an injury she had received when returning from one of her witch journeys. The form she had assumed was that of a black cat; and when she was about to enter her house, through a broken pane, a man passing, with a hedge-bill in his hand, struck the animal on the leg, and the witch was lame ever afterwards!

To return to Janet Anderson: it is evident that a woman of this kind would easily be able to frighten her neighbours, so as to induce them to give her money or goods. And it should be noticed that it is not her neighbours who bring her case before the Session; it is she who accuses them of calling her a witch. The severities at that time practised on reputed witches made it a rather dangerous thing to be called one; otherwise, I suspect, Janet would not have cared much about the reproach of it. Soon after the meeting of Kirk-Session to which we have referred, we find Janet in prison; the two bailies of Aberdour being very serviceable, in the matter, to the minister and elders. But, although she is now in 'firmance,' the Session are evidently at a loss to know how to proceed with the case. They

probably have no doubt, in their own minds, that Janet is a witch; but another question has to be faced: 'Have they proved it?' They are evidently not quite sure that they have; and in their difficulty they apply to a personage well known in those superstitious times, but whose name is probably now heard by many for the first time. I refer to 'the Brodder.' 'And who,' you say, 'was the Brodder?' He was a functionary called into existence by the necessities of those old times. His office was to settle the question, whether those accused of being witches were so or not; and his mode of procedure, from which, indeed, his occupation derived its name, was by searching for the 'devil's mark' on their bodies, by 'brodding' or pricking it with a sharp needle. The mark, it was averred, covered a spot insensible to pain; and when it was discovered there was an end of controversy regarding the matter. These witch-finders were, as a rule, unprincipled fellows, who had taken up the trade for gain, and sometimes bargained to clear a parish of witches at so much a head, as is sometimes done, in modern times, in the case of moles. The occupation was, moreover, a very cruel one; as, in many instances, they inflicted great torture on their victims, by running needles into their bodies, with the professed aim of discovering the mysterious mark. Such, then, is the functionary whom Mr. Bruce and his Session resolve to bring to their aid in the case of Janet Anderson. It would appear, however, either that the Brodder was too busily employed in the prosecution of his calling elsewhere, or that he had not been successful in discovering the mark on Janet, for there is no further notice of her for many years. She was, no doubt, released from prison; for another notice we have of her is after the lapse of nine years, when she applies to the Kirk-Session for a 'testimonial,' or certificate of character, being on the point of leaving the parish. The Session grant the certificate, but are careful to note the fact that 'she had been accused of being a witch.'

In 1654 Margaret Cant is accused of the crime of witchcraft, and begs of the Session that she may be cleared of the aspersion. The Session, however, refuse to do this until there is some general course taken with those who are similarly accused. It was evidently found a very difficult thing to deal with such cases; and, for a long time after this, we find the Session very chary of having anything to do with them. Occasionally, however, the smouldering flame bursts out. There is a curious instance of this in July 1661. It was about the time when the noble Covenanters were girding themselves for the last long struggle for liberty, carried on in the midst of privation, suffering, and blood. The minister and elders of Aberdour did not take any part in that contest; or, if they did, it was rather in opposition to the patriotic cause. But they did not like to be thought entirely idle, when their neighbours in the parish of Dalgety and elsewhere were so busy. And so it is recorded in the Minutes as follows: 'Finding that, in all parts, they are doing something for the dinging down of the kingdom of Sathan, the Session thought that they likewise would do something for God's glory.' And what is it that they are at length resolved to do? To plant their foot behind the old rights of Christ's Church in Scotland, and bid defiance to the assailant? No! it is a course of a less heroic kind on which the Session resolve to enter; for the Minute continues—and I think you will join me in regarding it as 'a lame and impotent conclusion,'—'Seeing there are severalls, in this toune, that long ago should have been apprehended for witchcraft, and never hands yet laid upon them, wherefore the Session desires the Bailzie to cause apprehend and incarcerate, presently, Margaret Currie and Catharine Robertson, or any of the two if the one be absent.' Let us follow Mr. Bruce and his elders in the path they have thus hewn out for themselves. A new feature appears in the case of these two women, for it is stated that they were 'accused by dying witches.' It was

a common thing at that time for those who died at the stake to tell of others who had attended nocturnal meetings along with them. This was called 'delation by dying witches.' Soon after this we find that Margaret Cant has also been apprehended, and that she and Margaret Currie have been brought the length of making an ample confession of their guilt. They admit that they have practised witchcraft, and they involve another woman, named Janet Bell, in their guilt. Janet is immediately ordered to be imprisoned in one of her own houses, she being the owner of several houses in Easter Aberdour. And now a curious incident occurs. Lord Morton hears of Janet Bell's imprisonment, and at once gives orders that she should be set at liberty. The Session are in great wrath at this, and the minister is deputed to inquire on what grounds his Lordship has given this order. The very same day on which it is resolved to take this step, the minister reports that Lord Morton is to give full satisfaction to the Session, and is to give orders to his officer to put Janet Bell in prison again; it being understood, however, that the Session shall be answerable for the way in which she and the other women in prison are treated. At the same time Mr. Bruce reports to the Session that 'he has sent for the man that tries the witches, for seeking out of the devil's mark;' and the minister seems to have been more successful in his efforts, on this occasion, to get the 'Brodder.' This personage seems, in fact, to have been on the spot, which probably accounts for all this hot haste; for the Session 'thought fit that he should go along with the elders to the witches, and let them know that he is to seek for the mark,' and that they are to be tried the following day. Once more there is a lack of definite information; but as in a following Minute Susanna Alexander is ordered to be sent to prison, because Margaret Cant, Catharine Robertson, and Janet Bell had, *in their confession*, accused her of being as guilty as they, I much fear that all three were burned. It is a stretch of leniency,

hardly to be looked for in those times, for such persons as confessed themselves guilty of witchcraft to be allowed to escape; and it is merely an incidental thing for notices of such burnings to be inserted in the Session Record. The way in which the miserable creatures were tried was this:— A commission was appointed by the Privy Council to try the case; and this commission was generally composed of gentlemen living in the neighbourhood. Evidence was led before this judicatory, and the judges had the power of putting the accused to torture, should this be deemed necessary. This torture, in ordinary cases, consisted in the free use of the brodder's needles; but in some instances, and more especially when the accused were of the male sex, instruments of a more dreadful kind were employed. The 'boots' were used for tormenting pressure on the legs; the 'caspie claws' for wedging the arms in a painful manner; while the 'pilniewinks,' a species of thumb-screw, produced the most excruciating torture when applied to the fingers. One cannot but feel indignant at the thought of such barbarities, practised even on those who had laid themselves open to the gravest suspicion of being guilty of witchcraft. It is but fair to say, however, that I have seen nothing to show that any instruments of torture beyond the Brodder's needles were ever used in the cases that occurred at Aberdour. It would, however, be rash to say that other instruments were not used. The last scene of all was of a kind almost too revolting to bear description. The wretched creatures were first tied to stakes, around which were piled heather, turf, wood, and sometimes coals and gunpowder; then they were strangled, and, the pile being set on fire, their bodies were burned to ashes. And yet, with such a fearful fate before their eyes, many persisted in attending nocturnal meetings for the practice of suspicious rites, and ran almost any risk.

In 1663 Mr. Bruce reported to the Kirk-Session that he had got the names of several persons in the parish, who

had been accused by dying witches at Auchtertool; but no active measures seem to have been resorted to in reference to them. Throughout nearly the whole of the seventeenth century, there are incidental notices which prove how deeply the belief in witchcraft had burned itself into the public mind. A common word of reproach among the people was 'witch-carle,' as applied to a man, and 'witch-bird,' as applied to the child of a woman accused of witchcraft. Again and again, too, complaint is made to the Session of those who 'cast up' to neighbours the sins of those relatives who had suffered for witchcraft. This 'casting up' of the sins of the dead is always dealt with by the Session as deserving of the severest censure.

Among the last notices of witchcraft in the parish is one which occurs in the year 1681, when Bessie Lamb accuses Elspeth Kirkland of the crime. Bessie's husband had become insane, and was so violent that he had to be kept in the house by the aid of such formidable obstructions as trees and posts. On one occasion, when the poor man was in one of his worst paroxysms, Elspeth Kirkland happened to go into his house, and took a 'hairn tedder'—a tether or rope made of hair—from the couple-foot. This was the head and front of the poor woman's offence; but no small matter was made of it by Bessie Lamb. She averred that no one but Elspeth knew that there was such a thing as a 'hairn tedder' there; and that she alone must have put it there, for the purpose of bewitching Bessie's husband. In proof of this, she declared that no sooner had the tether been taken away than her husband became perfectly calm. Whereupon, as she now confesses, she said that Elspeth was 'not soncie;' that is, unlucky or uncanny; and, further, used considerable freedom of speech, in calling Elspeth a 'witch,' and her children 'witch-birds.' This affords a good illustration of the frivolous grounds on which many at that time, and since, have been accused of witchcraft, or, as it was sometimes mildly expressed, being 'uncanny.'

Some common event happened: the cow refused to yield her milk, or the milk she yielded became speedily sour—probably on account of imperfectly washed dishes,—or when churned no butter would come; or, perhaps, the horse or the cow or the pig turned ill; or a foul chimney took fire, and as it blazed some sparks fell on the thatch, which, in dry weather, naturally burst into flame, and the house was burned in whole or part. But all these events proceeded from natural causes, many of them being traceable to carelessness. This, however, was thought too simple a way of accounting for such occurrences; and because there was some cross-grained old woman in the parish, who was sometimes heard wishing ill to her neighbours in general, or to the sufferer from some calamity in particular, straightway the blame of the whole matter was laid on her. There is a very common fallacy in reasoning by which one event is held to be the effect of another, merely because it follows it. This fallacy has a thousand false accusations of witchcraft lying at its door. Bessie Lamb's husband became calm after Elspeth Kirkland had removed the hair rope from the foot of the rafter, where, probably, it had been lying long before the poor man was seized with insanity; therefore it was the removal of the 'hairn tedder' that had made him better; and therefore it was the placing of the 'hairn tedder' there that had made him ill; and because it was Elspeth Kirkland who took it away, therefore it must have been she who put it there, with the evident design of bewitching Bessie Lamb's husband! This is not a tithe more absurd than the reasoning which sometimes passes unchallenged in the present day; although, fortunately, it seldom leads up to charges of witchcraft. Surely the time will come when education, going hand in hand with the benign spirit of Christianity, will lead to sounder reasoning, and better feeling between man and his neighbour. But we must follow Elspeth Kirkland's case to its close. The Session had evidently learned to be chary of accusa-

tions involving the charge of witchcraft; and so Bessie Lamb was ordered to appear in front of the pulpit when the congregation was assembled, and crave pardon for her aspersions against Elspeth Kirkland.

There were superstitions somewhat akin to the so-called witchcraft of the seventeenth century, yet in some respects different from it, which are noticed in the Session Records; and I must devote a few paragraphs to them. I suppose my audience will not need to be assured by many arguments that there was such a thing as dishonesty in the parish, in the seventeenth century. Now it becomes evident that, when losses occurred in this way, it was not only thought desirable to get the lost articles back, but some of the parishioners were rather unscrupulous as to the means they employed for this purpose. One very reprehensible mode was that which went by the name of 'the riddle and shears;' another method was by the 'key and Bible.' These were not only silly, but profane expedients, being attempts at divination—trying to discover by supernatural knowledge, and that generally believed to be from the Wicked One, what should have been found out by natural means. Those who professed to discover secret things in this way were, of course, impostors; and they who consulted them were either very weak or very wicked —possibly a mixture of both. There are several notices of the existence of these practices in Aberdour during the seventeenth century, and some of the instances came under the notice of the Session. Thus, on 1st August 1669, John Lister appears before the Kirk-Session, and gives in a bill against John Wardone, John M'Kie, and Jane Shaw, who, he alleges, said that he 'turned the riddle.' This short way of speaking of it indicates that it was well known, and so did not need a laboured description. Robert Chambers, in his *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, quotes the following account of it:—'Divination by a sieve was performed in this manner: "The sieve being suspended, after repeating

a certain form of words, it is taken between the two fingers only, and the names of the parties suspected repeated; he at whose name the sieve turns, trembles, or shakes, is reputed guilty of the evil in question. . . . It was sometimes practised by suspending the sieve by a thread, or fixing it to the points of a pair of scissors, giving it room to turn, and naming as before the parties suspected."'

At the same meeting of Session, it came out, in the evidence led, that John Lister, having lost some thread, said in the hearing of others, and, I have no doubt, with a knowing shake of his head, that he would make it come back again; and one of the elders having asked him how he would effect this, he replied that he would make 'a Psalm-book and a key' do it. The chief virtue of this mode of divination lay in the circumstance that many believed it to be effectual; and many a time the thief, afraid of being detected, found ways and means of restoring the stolen property; whereupon the diviner got credit for supernatural skill. On the occasion I allude to, the minister, Mr. Thomas Litster, very properly exhorted his namesake to 'fear God, and be more circumspect in his speeches.'

There is another instance of this superstition in 1678, when a girl, named Isobel Mercer, went into Harry Tod's house and showed a number of people how, by means of a key and a Bible, she could find out secret things. Being brought before the Session, Harry Tod deponed that he saw Isobel Mercer put a key into a Bible, and then she uttered the words, 'By St. Peter and by St. Paul, such a thing as she desired to know shall come to pass or be true;' whereupon the key and Bible turned. It is not very clear how secret things were discovered in this way; in all probability it was by the key pointing to some word or text. But the matter was reckoned so important in the eyes of the Kirk-Session, that the whole parties who had witnessed Isobel Mercer's performance were summoned; and the case was actually remitted to the Presbytery.

After careful deliberation, the Presbytery came to the conclusion that the practice 'savoured of diabolical arts and indirect contract with Satan.' In extenuation of her offence, the girl stated that she had learned the art by having seen it practised in London! She and all who witnessed the exhibition in Harry Tod's house had to appear before the pulpit, and crave pardon from God and the congregation. There can be no doubt that putting the Bible or Psalm-book to such a use was profane, and worthy of censure; but we question if the belief in divination by the 'Key and Bible,' or the 'Riddle and Scissors,' which was an analogous mode, was a whit more silly than the ridiculous practice of 'Table-turning,' or the belief in 'Spirit-rapping,' of which we have heard so much in our own day.

One other singular instance of superstition, occurring in the Minutes, I cannot refrain from noticing, and all the more because it shows how credulous even the learned men of that time were. In 1667 Mr. Francis Hannay was schoolmaster of Aberdour. On many grounds we may hold that he was a good specimen of the class to which he belonged. He had received his education at one of the Universities, and had taken the degree of Master of Arts. An intelligent, scholarly, shrewd man of affairs, I can vouch for it, was Mr. Francis Hannay. But he could not help being born in the seventeenth century, and I daresay he could as little help being tinged with the superstitious feeling of the period. A parish tragedy had occurred, in the month of May 1667. A dead child had been found at Easter Buchlyvie, and it was more than suspected that the poor innocent had met with foul play at the hands of its mother, Marjory Schort. It was the year in which Mr. Bruce the minister had died, and so Mr. Hannay was, for the time being, the leading dignitary in charge of parochial matters. He accordingly went to Easter Buchlyvie to inquire into this dark business. And what think you was the mode adopted by Mr. Hannay, for the

purpose of discovering the perpetrator of the foul deed? The mother was brought into the presence of her dead child, and made to touch it. So far well. The mere touch of the dead infant, nay, the mere sight of it, was fitted to awaken the pity that has its home in a mother's heart, and evoke a confession, if that heart has not turned to stone. But Mr. Hannay did not stop here. The sight, the touch, had not proved potent enough, and so he ordered the dead child to be put into its mother's arms. And what then? Hear his own words, in the Minute of Kirk-Session: —'The child's mouth was seen to open, as the by-standers were ready to testify.' This was considered conclusive— the opening of the child's mouth being, no doubt, deemed equivalent to a cry for vengeance on its murderer. The mother immediately afterwards confessed her guilt. Along with her dead child she was brought down to Aberdour the same day, and the infant's dust lies in some obscure corner of the old churchyard. The inhuman mother was given into the hands of Andrew M'Kie, 'the depute bailzie;' and I have no doubt she suffered death as the punishment of her crime.

A few paragraphs in reference to the state of matters in Inverkeithing and Burntisland during those superstitious times will make our statement more complete. Of the events which occurred in the parish of Dalgety I have spoken in another connection. Much as Aberdour and Dalgety distinguished themselves by their zeal in putting down witchcraft, it must be acknowledged that they have to yield the palm to Inverkeithing. Certain I am that neither Mr. Robert Bruce nor Mr. Andrew Donaldson had anything like the reputation, for this kind of work, that was enjoyed by Mr. Walter Bruce, the minister of Inverkeithing. Mr. Bruce, who was brother to the laird of Kinnwill, studied at the University of St. Andrews, and was presented to the parish of Inverkeithing by Charles the First, in 1641. He attracted the attention of the

whole neighbourhood by the display of a particular aptitude in dealing with cases of witchcraft. That he was not strictly orthodox we are led to believe by a notice of a strange sermon which he once preached, in which he is reported to have said 'that the spirit of godlines in thir tymes was ane salt humour, arising fra the melt [the spleen], trubling the stomack and ascending to the head, whilk maid a cracking of the brain.' Nor did he display the finest sense of propriety in the mode he employed in clenching an argument, as appears from a charge given by the Synod to the Presbytery of Dunfermline, to have a care of Mr. Walter, inasmuch as it is reported that he uses swearing. Mr. Bruce struck out a distinct path of his own to fame; and a generous posterity should not deny him his due as the greatest witch-finder of the seventeenth century within the bounds of the Presbytery of Dunfermline. Committees on witchcraft were admittedly incomplete without Mr. Walter Bruce. In 1650 he is engaged on a committee appointed to deal with a petition, presented to the Synod of Fife, by the husbands and children of women within the bounds who have been accused of witchcraft; and a few years later he is a member of a committee who have the notorious Robert Small in their hands—a man who went through the country pretending to cure diseases and recover stolen goods, by means of hidden arts, whether by the 'key and Bible,' or the 'riddle and shears,' does not appear. It is of more importance to know that Small appeared to be brought to a sense of his guilt, promising, through God's grace, never to do the like again. Whereupon the Lord Archbishop and Synod—for Episcopacy was at the time in the ascendant—'appointed that he appear before some congregation within the Presbitry of Megil, confes his sin, and professe his repentance for it, and engadge himself to doe no more so; and that this be intimate to all the congregations within the Presbitry: which the said Robert

acquiesced unto, and promised to do whenever he sould be appointed be the Presbitry of Megil.' Yet with such a man among them as Mr. Walter Bruce, the Presbytery of Dunfermline, on more than one occasion, found themselves inadequate to the management of some cases of witchcraft which came before them, and members of other Presbyteries were conjoined with them to help them over their difficulties. It is highly probable that some of these difficulties were connected with Inverkeithing. I have not had the opportunity of examining the Session Records of that parish, but all who are acquainted with Sir Walter Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* know how famous it was for its dealings with witches. There can, of course, be no doubt that it is to Inverkeithing Sir Walter refers, when, after relating some traditional stories regarding persons who had confessed themselves guilty of witchcraft, and yet afterwards were proved to be innocent, he narrates two authentic instances, one of them being the sad case of the lady of Pittadro. Sir Walter's words are these:—'The first of these instances regards a woman of rank, much superior to those who were usually accused of this imaginary crime. She was sister of Sir John Henderson of Fordel, and wife of the laird of Pittadro, in Fife. Notwithstanding her honourable birth and connections, this unfortunate matron was, in the year 1649, imprisoned in the common jail of Edinburgh, from the month of July till the middle of the month of December, when she was found dead, with every symptom of poison. Undoubtedly the infamy of this charge, and the sense that it must destroy her character and disgrace her family, was the cause which instigated her to commit suicide.' As I have had the opportunity of examining most of the papers in the charter-room at Fordell, I am able to add some important facts to this statement. Margaret Henderson, the lady referred to, was the daughter of James Henderson of Fordell, the father of the first baronet, and her mother was Jean Murray, the

daughter of the tenth baron of Tullibardine. By this marriage there were four sons and seven daughters. Three of the sons, Sir Robert, Sir James, and Sir Francis, were brave soldiers, and for their gallantry abroad were knighted. Of the daughters, Grizell was married to Alexander Douglas of Mains; Barbara to James Spittal of Leuchat—an estate now merged in that of Donibristle; and Margaret, whose sad story we have just heard, was married to William Echline of Pittadro—a property adjoining Fordell, and now incorporated with it. This William Echline was, I believe, the son of Harry Echline of Pittadro, and a brother of Robert Echline, who in 1601 was minister of the second charge at Inverkeithing—the only minister who ever filled that charge,—but who, in 1613, was promoted to the bishopric of Down and Connor. You will remember that this personage has crossed our path in an earlier lecture as a persecutor of Robert Blair.

From references to the case, which are found in an Act of the Scottish Parliament, of date 19th July 1649, it is put beyond dispute that the lady of Pittadro had been accused by several persons who had been put to death for the crime of witchcraft, of being involved in the crime for which they suffered, and that she had 'kepit severall meittings and abominable societie with the devill.' This was too inviting a case for Mr. Walter Bruce to pass over, notwithstanding the high social position in which the accused stood; and fearing, as she might well do, what the issue would be in the hands of such a keen witch-finder as the minister of Inverkeithing, she made her escape to Edinburgh. But she was not allowed to remain long in peace there. Her case was brought before the General Assembly, and that Court addressed a supplication to Parliament, stating the crime with which Lady Pittadro was charged, mentioning the fact that she was now apprehended and lodged in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, and craving that a course should be taken for putting her to legal trial before the Justice-General.

This petition was granted, the Estates of Parliament leaving it on record that 'they have recommendit and recommendis the said supplicatioun, w^t^ the depositions of certaine witches against the said Margaret Hendirsoune, to Mr. Thomas Nicollsone, His Majesties Advocat, and ordanis him to intend and follow furth ane criminall persute aganis her, befoir the Justice Generall and his deputis, for the said cryme of witchcraft, and givis warrand and [power] to the saidis Justice Generall and his deputis to call and conveine befoir them the said Margaret Hendirsone, for the said cryme of witchcraft, and proceid and administerat Justice aganis hir, and if shoe be guiltie of the said cryme of witchcraft, to convict and condemne hir, pronunce sentence of death against [her], cause strangle hir, and burne hir bodie, and doe everie requisit in sic caices.'

What the causes were which delayed the trial thus ordered, and at what stage of the procedure in her case the lady of Pittadro committed suicide, I have been unable to discover. In whatever light we regard it, the story is a dark and sad one, and seems to reflect nothing but disgrace on those who had any hand in originating it, Mr. Walter Bruce among the rest. It was something more than a doubtful reputation that Mr. Walter acquired, by means of his dealings with such cases. When a man was reputed to have a talent for such work, and more especially if he himself was convinced that he possessed it, he must, many a time, have been sorely tempted to ride his hobby in an unmerciful way; and Mr. Bruce evidently kept the magistrates of Inverkeithing pretty fully occupied with his witch cases. So much were these worthy men bowed down under the pressure of this kind of work, that, in April 1649, as it stands on record, the bailies of Inverkeithing signified their desire to the Synod of Fife, that help might be given them in examining witches, and bringing them to confession; and the Synod recommended the distressed condition of the bailies to the Presbytery of Dunfermline.

From the date—three months before the incarceration of the lady of Pittadro—it is extremely probable that her case was one of those which gave such trouble to the magistrates of Inverkeithing.

But we are not yet done with the exploits of Mr. Bruce as a witch-hunter. Either through his keen scent, or for a reason which I shall presently mention, grave suspicion began to arise that the wives of some of the magistrates were not free of the taint of witchcraft. We have just seen how active these men had been in the work prescribed to them by their minister, so long as the game run down was not within their own preserves. But would they be as keen if these preserves were invaded? I have been assured by an intelligent parishioner of Inverkeithing, that a tradition has come down, to the effect that the prosecution of witches by the magistrates of the burgh became so intolerable that it was resolved by some of the wise heads of the place to put a stop to it. And they fell on the ingenious device of accusing the wives of some of the magistrates of the crime. It was found that these cases did not proceed so briskly as some that had preceded them; the evidence was not quite so ample as was to be desired; and what there was of it seemed far from reliable. The whole matter practically assumed the form of wife-keeping *versus* witch-burning. I wonder these wise men did not think of beginning with Mr. Walter Bruce's wife, Joanna, sister of Robert Menzies of Rotmell. She was still alive, and lived for nearly half a century after this. There may have been reasons well known at the time, although unknown to us, which made this step unadvisable; but it should be kept in mind in the event of witchcraft coming back. All honour to the magistrates of Inverkeithing, who humanely preferred to nourish and cherish their own wives, rather than burn the wives of others as witches!

There is a striking corroboration of this tradition, in the fact that the Scottish Parliament, on the 31st of July 1649,

on the ground that the magistrates of Inverkeithing were remiss in dealing with cases of reputed witchcraft, appointed the following persons to deal with them, viz., John Bairdie of Selvadge, William Blackburne, John Davison, John Douglas, Thomas Thomson, John Anderson, and James Brown, all burgesses of Inverkeithing. It is to be hoped that the Estates of Parliament, before they named these men for this work, made sure that they were either bachelors or widowers. If they did not, we may be sure the keen-witted people of Inverkeithing would immediately delate their wives as witches. Whether this actually took place we cannot, in default of evidence, take it upon us to say; but we hear nothing more of the witches of Inverkeithing.

Of Mr. Walter Bruce we do, however, hear a little more. He had, for some considerable time, been acting as if man's chief end, and that of the minister of Inverkeithing in particular, had been to hunt witches; and so he had been grievously neglecting other departments of duty which, in the estimation of his parishioners and his co-presbyters, were at least as important. The sad end of the lady of Pittadro must have stirred up a disagreeable feeling in the minds of many towards Mr. Bruce; and not a single magistrate, or an accused wife of a magistrate, would be able to bear the sight of him. So we are not astonished to learn that on June 26th, 1650, Mr. Bruce was deposed from the ministerial office, 'for gross neglects in the special duties of the ministrie.' He was, however, restored to office in 1651, conformed to Episcopacy in 1662, and died about the year 1673.

I have dwelt longer on these matters connected with Inverkeithing than I intended, but the materials were so tempting that I could not forbear bringing them under your notice. A very few sentences regarding Burntisland will bring this lecture to a close. As far back as the year 1597, Janet Smyth was accused of witchcraft at Burntisland, and was condemned to be 'worriet [strangled] and brunt

to the death.' In the following year Janet Allane was also convicted of the crime, and condemned to be 'quick burnt to the death.' This reveals a more horrible mode of execution than any other case that has come under our notice. Mercy generally prevailed so far as to secure that the wretched creature was dead ere the pile was fired; in this 'quick' burning, however, it is a living victim that we see in the midst of the flames. But if Burntisland was thus earlier occupied with the burning of witches than other places in our neighbourhood, of which we have authentic information, and if she shared in the feverish excitement on the subject which characterised the year 1649, as Acts of Parliament show, she possessed in one of her ministers a witch-doctor, who did what he could to deal effectively with the moral epidemic. For when the Presbytery of Dunfermline, in 1643, were at their wits' end to know how to deal satisfactorily with the many and painful cases of witchcraft that came before them, they prayed the Synod to send them some skilled assistants from the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. And Mr. John Smith, at that time minister of Leslie, but before the year closed minister of Burntisland, was one of the three sent. Mr. Smith, a few years after this, was translated to Trinity College Church, Edinburgh; but whether it was his skill as a witch-doctor that led to such speedy promotion I must leave undetermined.

I have left myself little time for moralising on this painful subject. I feel assured that while we are willing to do justice to the men, whether lay or clerical, who busied themselves with such cases, and are prepared to make great allowance for them, on the ground of the circumstances in which they were placed, there must be in our hearts a feeling of thankfulness to God that we live in more enlightened times. We have made some progress in many directions since those old days. Shame on us if we had not! But let us make sure that there are not blots in connection with the intellectual, moral, and religious state

of the neighbourhood in which we dwell, that will, considering the clearer light we enjoy, look as black, in the eyes of future generations, as the superstitions we have now been looking at do in ours. The greatest panegyrists of the present time must admit that there is much progress still to be made. I trust the time is not far distant when every child in the neighbourhood shall be able to read his Bible, and take a pleasure in the exercise,—when our week-day and Sabbath schools shall be taken full advantage of,—when our churches shall be filled with intelligent and reverent worshippers,—and when a pure, social morality shall pervade our population. For then true religion, adding to the comforts of the present life, shall prepare us for another and a better.

LECTURE XII.

Ministry of Mr. Alexander Scot—Lord Morton's protest against his admission—Ebenezer Erskine's testimony to Mr. Scot's excellence—Acts of Kirk-Session pointing to pastoral diligence, in reference to education, morality, and care of the poor—John Stevenson has his ruinous house rebuilt—Troops in the Castle give much trouble—The Jacobite rising in 1715 tells severely on the parish—The Communion season in 1718, with tent-preaching on the Castle green—Mr. Scot's death—Wealth of the box—Revenue derived from mortcloth dues—Banking business of the Kirk-Session—Glance at general condition of the Church—The 'Marrow' controversy—Balance of parties in the Presbytery—Story of the forced settlement of Mr. John Liston—Lord Morton's high-handed measures—Protest of Ebenezer Erskine and others—Ordination of Mr. Liston by a 'Riding Committee'—Mr. Nairne's sermon and ill-chosen text—Alienation of the people from the Church of their fathers—The dreary period that followed—Strange case of discipline—Elders deserting, and parents going elsewhere for baptism—John Millar deposed from the eldership—Strange mendicancy on the part of the Session—A badge for beggars within the parish—Begging cripples carried away on a 'slead'—Collections made in Mr. John Liston's time—Mr. Robert Liston appointed colleague and successor—Fulness of secular details in Minutes—The mortcloths—The minister's travails in getting a church bell—Notices of times of dearth—Condition of the parish, its inhabitants and industries, at the close of the eighteenth century—Mr. Liston chosen Moderator of General Assembly—Dr. Bryce becomes minister of the parish—The Volunteer movement—Notable persons connected with Aberdour.

We have now traced the fortunes of our village and neighbourhood from the twelfth century down to the close of the seventeenth. The notices of it in the earlier centuries, as might have been anticipated, were meagre, being chiefly incidental references found in the charters of the Monastery of Inchcolme and papers belonging to the Morton family. Yet few as they are, these notices we have found to be far

from uninteresting. For they tell us that as far back as the year 1178 the village of Aberdour existed, and had its church under the charge of the Canons of Inchcolme; and no one can say how much further back the history, both of church and village, might have been traced had authentic documents been preserved. In that case, we doubt not, its church would have been identified as an early settlement of the Culdees, and the village, in some form or other, might have been descried far away in the misty period of the Roman occupation. In the absence of written documents one may indeed exercise a large discretionary power in conjecturing what may have been, and then the difficulty is not how far to go, but where to stop. In the humbler domain of history to which we confine ourselves, it is something to be able to point to evidence which proves the church of St. Fillan of Aberdour to have been in existence in the twelfth century. And it is something to be able to point to such names as those of Vipont and Mortimer, and Randolph the Regent of Scotland, as the owners of our old Castle ere the lordly Douglases possessed it and its surrounding domain. Beginning our investigations in those old times, we have found our way by easy stages down to the close of the seventeenth century, as I have already said. We have traced the rise and growth and fall of the Monastery, and its offshoot, the Hospital of St. Martha, renowned for the shelter it gave to the many pilgrims who came from afar to get healing from the waters of St. Fillan's Well. We have seen the old church pass from the hands of Roman Catholic priests to the care of Reformed pastors. We have marked the changes that came over the population, as early Reformation times gave place to declension, both in Church and State, under the kingcraft and tyranny of James the Sixth; and how these in their turn stirred up longings for freedom, and led to heroic actions, which ushered in the times of the Covenant—the first half of which was a period of life and progress, the latter half a season of darkness and

blood. At length, however, the Revolution Settlement came as a morning of joy after a night of weeping, and the land had rest. Speaking more particularly of the parish, and the labours of the ministers and elders in it, from the period of the Reformation down to the time when the Session Record begins in 1649, we have, with the aid of such side-lights as were available, tried to reproduce the men and manners of the time. And then, availing ourselves of the Record of the Session's labours, we have endeavoured to glean from it what it tells of the work of ministers and elders, in the various departments of their official duty, down to the close of the seventeenth century. In resuming our narrative, and bringing it to a close in the present lecture, I may as well forewarn you not to expect the same fulness of details in the Record of the Session's labours as we have had in the past. The eighteenth century was a tame one, compared with that which preceded it, and much of what was done by the Session has been recorded in the briefest manner. Still I think we shall find it worth our while to survey the annals of the eighteenth century; and for various reasons I do not at present intend to prosecute these investigations beyond the close of that century.

The first minister of Aberdour, on the traces of whose labours we come at the beginning of the eighteenth century, is Mr. Alexander Scot, the successor of Mr. David Cumming. Mr. Scot was a student of the University of Edinburgh, and was licensed by the metropolitan Presbytery on 3d September 1701. The right of the patron to present to the charge having lapsed, Mr. Scot was called by the Presbytery, and ordained 24th September 1702. This settlement it appears was in direct opposition to the wish of the Earl of Morton, but his opposition in the circumstances did not avail much. His Lordship was, however, determined to let his sentiments be known, for, on the day fixed for the ordination, he openly protested against Mr. Scot's

admission. Notwithstanding this, it must be said that Mr. Scot was an excellent man, and proved himself to be a pastor of the right stamp. Indeed, with all desire to estimate as highly as possible the various ministers of Aberdour who have come under our notice, it must be said that, in our estimation, he holds a higher place than any one of the whole line, from the period of the Reformation down to the close of the eighteenth century. Speaking of Mr. Scot's labours, the celebrated Ebenezer Erskine, in a paper which I have been fortunate enough to discover among the Wodrow MSS. in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, and to which I shall afterwards more particularly refer, says:— 'When it's considered that the said congregation [at Aberdour] did enjoy the blessing of the Rev. Mr. Scot his faithful and painful [painstaking] ministry about the space of twenty years, and were privileged with many solemn Communions, with which, and the Christian, serious, tender carriage of that people on the said occasions, sundry reverend ministers within this province have expressed their great satisfaction, we may conclude the number of serious seekers of God is much increased there, and that this people do more deserve the character and privileges of a Christian congregation than formerly.' It is delightful to have this testimony, from such a competent and thoroughly reliable source, given at the close of Mr. Scot's ministry. And although the Minutes of Session all throughout his ministry lack the fulness that could be desired, they yet point to just such a ministry as Ebenezer Erskine has sketched in the above extract. The cause of education engages the attention of Mr. Scot and his elders, from time to time, the attendance of the poorest children at school not being neglected. The staff of elders is gradually brought up from eight to sixteen, and their office is not experienced to be a sinecure. They are regularly questioned by the minister, at the meetings of Session, in reference to the state of morality and religion in their several quarters, and

abuses of various kinds are firmly and earnestly dealt with. The following extracts will give some idea of the manner and spirit in which the Session acted in reference to such matters:—

July 2, 1704.—'It 's enacted, this day, that those who are found to absent themselves from the ordinances, as also those who shall be found drinking on the Lord's day or otherways, as also those who sell ale to such drinkers, are to be censured, as the minister and elders think fit; and the minister is desired to make intimation of the said Act from the pulpit, the next Lord's day.'

June 15, 1712.—'This day, sermon being preached anent the duties of elders, after Divine service in the forenoon, William Weems of Cuthilhill, John Bell [in Aberdour], John Russell [in Bucklyvie], William Whyte [in Mountquhey], were ordained elders. They were exhorted to be vigilant in their duties, in repressing of vice and cherishing virtue; and to set up the worship of God in their own families, and to press others in their several quarters to do the like.' The elders ordained four years later—making sixteen in all—were John Turnbull, in Bucklyvie; Alexander Henderson, in Couston; Robert Livingston, in Torryhills; Robert Moyes, James Cousin, Alexander Bell, and Archibald Davidson, in Aberdour.

Feb. 7, 1717.—'This day the minister did recommend it to the elders that each of them, in their several quarters, should see to the putting to school of the young ones, that were capable of learning, and to bring a list of those that were not at any school to the Session.'

Feb. 26, 1717.—'Some of the members of the Session gave in an account that all the youth in their quarters, that are capable of learning, are at school. Others were again desired to bring in a list of any that could not read within their bounds.'

Jan. 2, 1718.—'This day the Session allowed six pounds Scots to a poor man, called John Walls, in the north part of

the parish, who teaches some poor ones who are not able to come to the head school.'

Other extracts with a similar tone pervading them might be given, but these will suffice regarding the departments of work to which they refer.

The period of Mr. Scot's ministry seems to have been a prosperous one, not merely as regards the domains of religion and morality, but also in as far as temporal matters were concerned. A list of paupers is given in a Minute of October 1717; and there are only eleven in the parish—the allowance to each of them being sixpence fortnightly! There are, however, occasional glimpses of ways in which extra aid is bestowed. Thus on December 14th, 1718, the following Minute occurs:—'This day the distressed condition of several poor folk in the parish was represented to the Session, and to them was distributed as follows: Colline Hunter, a poor sick child, was allowed seven pence per week, till he should recover. *Item*, John Walls, a poor dying man, in the north end of the parish [he whom we saw engaged in teaching poor children there, a year before this date], was allowed two pounds. *Item*, John Meldrum, a poor man, was allowed a crown, "to help him to an horse." *Item*, Christian Robertson, a blind woman, was allowed a pound.' The following Minute gives us a striking instance of the way in which a case of great destitution was met in Mr. Scot's days: Sept. 18th, 1719.—'This day John Stevenson appeared before the Session, with a petition representing his afflicted and necessitous condition, his house being ruinous, and himself left a widower with five young children, all naked, for the most part, and himself an old man, altogether unable to do any thing, either for the sustentation of his family, or the rebuilding of his house. The Session taking this to their serious consideration, did think it meet that his case should be laid before the congregation, in the words of his own petition, that so every one might give something towards his relief, and that on the Sabbath

following.' It gives a pleasing view of the neighbourly spirit existing in our parish at that time, when we find that, on the following Sabbath, ninety-nine pounds Scots were raised for relieving the necessitous condition of John Stevenson and his family, and for rebuilding his ruinous house. These objects, it should be noticed, were to be secured in a business-like way, a committee of elders being appointed to see the money laid out to the best advantage.

During Mr. Scot's ministry, as on former occasions, the troops quartered in the Castle gave the Session much annoyance, many cases of discipline arising from their misbehaviour. An examination of some of these cases brings to light unmistakable evidence of the contamination of manners which resulted from their presence in the village. In one of these cases a question arises whether or not one of the dragoons, named Dunbar, is a married man; whereupon the minister of Dalkeith is written to, and in answer says that there is a woman there who calls herself Margaret Dunbar, 'in the English fashion.' According to the Scotch fashion, I need hardly say, married women still went by their maiden name.

The great occasion which led to the quartering of so many troops in the Castle at this time, was the Jacobite Rising in 1715, when the Earl of Mar embarked on his foolish and bootless attempt to overthrow the Hanoverian dynasty, in favour of the old Pretender. This movement told severely on our neighbourhood. It could hardly fail to do so, when Burntisland was in the hands of the rebels. Francis Stuart, the brother of the Earl of Moray, was implicated, to some extent, in the movement, and so were the laird of Kilrie and Colin Simpson of Whitehill, both of whom were heritors in the parish. Some strange scenes were witnessed both at Auchtertool and Burntisland at that time; but we can only notice the fact that, from August 23d, 1715, till February 8th, 1716, no meetings of Kirk-Session at Aberdour are minuted. In the Record the words occur, 'An

interruption occasioned by the Rebellion and troubles in this country.' It shows in what an unsettled state the parish was, when for six months the Session had to suspend their meetings.

Owing to the want of details in the Minutes during the time of Mr. Scot's ministry, I cannot speak with confidence as to the frequency with which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ministered in the parish. Apparently it was not oftener than once a year; and although the date fluctuates a little, August is the month in which we find it most frequently observed. Communion Fast-days begin to appear in 1710. On August 10th, 1718, six men were appointed to 'keep the doors' of the church on the Communion Sabbath. On another occasion, two years later, the elders are appointed to wait at the kirk-doors and Castle gate, in their turns; and in connection with this observance of the Sacrament, the singular notice occurs, that the sum of nineteen shillings and sixpence was given for glasses broken at the Castle green at the Sacrament. It is evident that the tent was pitched, on such occasions, on the Castle green, which explains the provision made for elders being at the Castle gate. On October 28th, 1720, Henry Stocks, the village wright, gets nine pounds eighteen shillings Scots for putting up and taking down the tent at the Communion, erecting the tables, and mending the south dyke.

Mr. Scot died in the month of February 1721, in the forty-eighth year of his age, and the nineteenth of his ministry. He met with his Session for the last time on 8th December 1720; and on the 22d of February 1721 Mr. Henderson of Dalgety presided. It gives one a striking view of the temporal prosperity of the parish at this time, to learn that, when the Kirk-box was opened in the presence of Mr. Henderson, there was found in it, of money £674, 18s. 8d., and of bonds no fewer than seven, of which one was for 100 marks, two of £100 Scots each, one of £24 Scots, and one of £12 sterling. This was

evidently the great period for the accumulation of poor's money in the parish of Aberdour. Nor is this prosperous condition hard to be accounted for. The coal trade was at that time giving full employment to a great many, and this not only at the north end of the parish, where the pits were, but to those who were employed in carting the coal to the harbour, those who loaded the vessels there, and to the skippers and others who traded between the harbour and Leith. The shipping trade was evidently extensive; and the music of the loom, however harsh in the ears of modern amateurs, told of money-making in double-quick time. And there cannot be a doubt that the population must have stood high, and that money must have been plentiful in the village at that time, for during the last three years of Mr. Scot's ministry there was handed in to the Session, of mortcloth dues alone, no less a sum than £150, 19s., being at the rate of £50 a year. The income from this source alone, calculated for the whole period of Mr. Scot's ministry, would give no less a sum than £1000 Scots; and they who bear in mind what a pound Scots could purchase at the time will be the first to acknowledge how large a sum this is. If it is asked whether the money thus accumulated was allowed to lie and rust in the box, the bonds we have just referred to give a decided negative to that supposition. The Session evidently did a large stroke of banking business. Lending money on good security, and at good interest, they made a handsome thing of it, and as if a spring of molten gold had been tapped in the bottom of the box, it was gradually filling. Indeed, I much fear this state of matters proved an entanglement to good Mr. Scot and his Session, and that the amount of their banking business with the 'gold that perisheth' interfered somewhat with the higher kind of trading with which the Master had charged them.

One of the strangest chapters of the history of Aber-

dour is that on which we now enter, dealing with the incidents which occurred immediately after the death of Mr. Scot. The parish had at length enjoyed the benefit of the labours of a minister Evangelical in creed and devotedly pious in character; and labouring as he did for nearly a score of years, time had been given him for making more than a surface impression on the people of Aberdour. That such an impression was actually made we have already shown on the authority of the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, who, when he made the statement, had for many years been minister of Portmoak, in the neighbouring Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, and so had ample opportunity of knowing the state of affairs in Aberdour. It comes to us with all the greater force when we find such a man speaking, as he does, of the blessing the parish enjoyed under the faithful and painstaking ministry of Mr. Scot, and it also gives a high value to the testimony borne to the solemnity of the Communion seasons at Aberdour, and the serious and tender demeanour of the congregation on these occasions. The natural wish of every earnest heart in glancing along the line of the history of the parish up till this time, must be that Mr. Scot's successor may be a man of like spirit, who will take up his work, and carry it forward to a still more prosperous issue. This was evidently what the great bulk of the people wished, but how sadly they were frustrated in their desire we have now to relate.

Before doing this we must, however, take a glance at the general condition of ecclesiastical matters in Scotland at the time. Patronage had been virtually abolished at the Revolution Settlement, when it was enacted that the heritors and elders were 'to name and propose the person to the whole congregation, to be either approven or disapproven by them;' but it was restored again by the Tory Government in 1712. For a considerable time, however, a numerous body of the ministers in the Church regulated

their proceedings in such a way that the patron's rights were not allowed to set aside the rights of the people, or the regulations laid down in the Standards of the Church on the subject. A tide of worldliness and indifference to the sound Evangelical doctrines which had so greatly distinguished the Covenanting times had, however, now set in; and along with this the rights of the Christian people in the calling and settlement of ministers came to be disregarded. Those who are acquainted with the history of the period are aware how the 'Marrow Controversy' was raging about the time of Mr. Scot's death. This controversy, I may state in a sentence, was one which arose regarding a book characterised by Evangelical views, and designated the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*—a work written by Edward Fisher of Oxford in the sixteenth century, and republished at the time with which we are dealing, with the view of recalling Scotchmen to sounder views of Gospel truth than those which had begun to be generally entertained. And so far had the Church of Scotland declined from Evangelical views, that, in 1720, the teaching of this book was condemned by the General Assembly; and there was a most marked contrast between the severity shown to those who had been instrumental in spreading these views, and the tenderness shown to others who had espoused Pelagian or even Arian error. It soon became evident that those who treated such errors so tenderly were not the men to respect the God-given rights of the Christian people; and among the cases in which these rights were most thoroughly trampled under foot, hardly any one was more flagrant than that of Aberdour.

Public attention was at that time a good deal turned to the Presbytery of Dunfermline, to which Aberdour belonged. Some able defenders of Evangelical truth and the rights of the Christian people were found in it; of whom Ralph Erskine, minister at Dunfermline, was one. It so happened that, at the time of Mr. Scot's death, the Presbytery was

nearly equally divided on these questions. There were at that time fourteen charges within its bounds; Aberdour was vacant; four of the ministers were either sick or dying, and so could not attend the meetings of Presbytery; four of the remainder held the Marrow doctrine, and five were opposed to it. In this way it became a serious question with the leading party in the Church on what side the minister might be who should be settled at Aberdour. If he should be on the Evangelical side, the parties in the Presbytery would be equally balanced; and if in the meantime any of the anti-Marrow men should be removed to other charges, the Evangelicals might have a positive majority. In point of fact, when Mr. Hepburn of Torryburn was called to New Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, this matter of the balance of parties in the Presbytery was so prominently before the eyes of the General Assembly, as to lead them to enact that, in the event of Mr. Hepburn being translated, the Presbytery of Dunfermline were not to ordain his successor, except with the consent of the Synod of Fife. The bearing of all this on the Aberdour case will speedily appear. Listen, meanwhile, to a sentence or two from Ralph Erskine on this matter. 'The disposition of the judicatories,' he says, 'too evidently appeared, whenever any student or candidate was supposed to be tinctured with the Marrow, that is, a Gospel spirit. There was no quarter for such; queries upon queries were formed to discourage them and stop their way, either of being entered on trials or ordained into churches; while those who were of the most loose and corrupt principles were most favoured by them. These things are too notour to be denied; and these were some of the sad and lasting effects of the foresaid Acts of Assembly [regarding the Marrow controversy], and the sad occasion of planting many churches with men that were little acquainted with the Gospel, yea, enemies to the doctrine of grace.' It was in these circumstances that the vacancy in the charge at Aberdour was to be filled up.

Let me now give you a simple narrative of the facts of the case.

A few months after Mr. Scot's death we have the following Minute of Kirk-Session :—

June 25, 1721.—'John Millar and John Davidson were appointed to attend at Dunfermline, the next Presbytery, to get a hearing of Mr. Thomas Kay, Mr. Thomson, and Mr. Don.'

Some formidable difficulty appears to have arisen, for in the month of October of that year, the Minutes of Session bear that 'it was agreed unanimously that James Bell and Alexander Henderson should attend at Dunfermline, to address the Rev. Presbytery for supply, and ask their advice anent the comfortable settlement of this parish.' From time to time similar notices appear, until, in May 1723, two years and three months after Mr. Scot's death, it is intimated that Mr. John Liston has been ordained minister of Aberdour. These are very meagre notices, but I shall now attempt to fill up the gaps. You have observed the request of the Kirk-Session to the Presbytery, that the congregation should have a hearing of Mr. Thomas Kay, Mr. Thomson, and Mr. Don. It would appear that from the first Mr. Kay was the object of the people's choice ; but James, the sixth Lord Morton, who had protested against the ordination of Mr. Scot, found a successor of similar views in his brother, Robert, the seventh Earl. His Lordship had resolved that Mr. John Liston should be minister of the parish ; and having presented him to the charge, he had the courage to ask the Presbytery to ordain the presentee without the formality of a call. It was scarcely to be expected that a Presbytery which counted among its members such men as Ralph Erskine, and Samuel Charters of Inverkeithing, would consent to this proposal. In point of fact, the Presbytery refused to do it, 'as not agreeable to Presbyterian principles.' And, now, what was to be done? It was necessary to get something of the nature of a call, if

Mr. Liston's settlement was to be proceeded with; and it remained to be seen what the complexion of that call would be, and how the Church Courts would deal with it. And even at this distance of time we know a good deal about that call. The day fixed for the moderation came round. Two candidates were proposed,—Mr. Thomas Kay and Mr. John Liston. In favour of Mr. Liston there appeared Lord Morton, the patron; several heritors, of whom we shall speak presently; two of the elders, and seventeen heads of families. In favour of Mr. Kay there appeared one heritor, nine elders, and nearly the whole body of the people, including many who were feuars, with the exceptions which I have just stated. From this you will see that it was very much a case of Patron and Heritors *versus* the People. And very questionable tactics had been resorted to in order to swell the list of the heritors. The laird of Kilrie and Colin Simpson of Whitehill had been out in the Rebellion of 1715, and so were civilly disqualified for voting, yet the names of both appeared in favour of Mr. Liston's call. Moreover, it was known that the laird of Kilrie had not given warrant to any one to append his name to the call; and Colin Simpson, with considerable forethought as to the civil consequences of his disloyalty, had, it was reported, already sold his land to the Earl of Morton. Fagot votes, too, even in ecclesiastical matters, would seem to have been in vogue at that time, for Sir James Holburne of Menstrie and Otterston, and his son, both voted as heritors, on the ground that they were proprietors of a part of the lands of Couston, called Delmyre, a small enclosure without so much as a house on it. And Sir John Henderson of Fordell appeared to register his vote, in favour of Mr. Liston, on the ground that he (Sir John) was proprietor of that same pendicle. It was objected at the time that this was unfair; but the defence was forthcoming, in lieu of a better, that it did not belong to a Church Court to decide on the question of the validity of claims of a civil kind. On

this ground a hundred persons might have appeared, and registered their votes as heritors owning the same property, and no objection have been taken. It was urged further, that as the Earl of Moray and Sir John Henderson had ceased to belong to the Church of Scotland, they could not legally sign the call; and it was argued that, as the two Orroks of Balram seldom entered a Presbyterian place of worship, a similar objection stood in their way. This combination of the heritors, to thrust on the people a minister whom they did not wish, and who therefore was little likely to do them good, does little honour to these men. And it looks ill on the part of the Church, when we know further that the Presbytery of Dunfermline were not allowed to preside, in accordance with the usual mode of procedure, at the moderation of the call. That which was once only feared by the leaders of the Church had now evidently taken place,—a preponderance of Evangelical influence in the Presbytery,—and a Committee of Synod are intrusted with the management of the call. The Committee evidently see everything in the light which the heritors' wishes shed on it; and it is a trying day for the people of Aberdour. 'And how,' you will ask, 'did they behave?' The great bulk of them, it must be said, demeaned themselves calmly and circumspectly, so as to win the respect of the onlookers; but the truth must be told,—this was not the case with all. 'One sinner,' the proverb tells us, 'destroyeth much good.' And when the sinner is a rude and boisterous one, the amount of good destroyed is frequently very great. That there were persons of this type at the exciting meeting in the old church of Aberdour on the occasion referred to is undeniable; and even at the risk of being thought ungallant, it must be said that those who signalised themselves most in this way were of the gentler sex. On delicate ground like this I am glad to give place to such a courtly man as Ebenezer Erskine, who probably was present on the occasion, or at

least had ample opportunity of knowing the true state of matters. Hear the minister of Portmoak: 'It cannot be denied that the congregation of Aberdour is Christian, having right to choose their own pastor. Indeed, the carriage of a few women at the moderation, and the day thereafter, was very unchristian and offensive, and therefore justly testified against by the Reverend Synod; but this cannot be laid to the charge of the elders or body of that people, especially when they witnessed their detestation and abhorrence thereof, as was declared before the Reverend Synod.'

What, now, was the result of all these strange proceedings? The call to Mr. Liston, secured in this extraordinary way, went up to the Synod, not at one of its ordinary meetings, but one called for the occasion. A full statement of the facts of the case was made, on the side of the congregation, by their good friend Ebenezer Erskine, who was supported by Mr. William Moncrieff, minister at Largo, and Mr. George Gillespie, minister at Strathmiglo, a grandson of the celebrated minister of that name in Covenanting times. But it did not avail. The leading party in the Church had forgotten the traditions of the First and Second Reformations. They had placed themselves on the inclined plane of worldly policy and doctrines devised by men; and they made short work of the objections urged by the congregation and those who spoke on its behalf. They ordered a committee of their number—one of the 'Riding Committees,' as they came to be called—to repair to Aberdour and ordain Mr. Liston, which was accordingly done, as the following extract from the Session Record shows:—

May 7, 1723.—'This day Mr. John Liston, preacher in the Presbytery of Linlithgow, was ordained minister of Aberdour by a Committee of the Synod of Fife. Mr. Nairne, minister of Anstruther, preached the ordination sermon, on 1 Thessalonians, chapt. v., verses 12 and 13.'

The words that formed the subject of Mr. Nairne's sermon on that memorable occasion are as follows: 'And

we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.' A beautiful and solemn text this is; and we trust Mr. Nairne's sermon was in some measure worthy of it. But, even at this distant date, we protest against the selection of it, as altogether inappropriate to the occasion, and, in the circumstances, fitted to do dishonour to the Word of God. He would have found a text far better suited to the occasion in John x. 1: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.'

Before the deed was done by the Synod, which to a large extent blighted the religious prospects of the parish, which rendered the great mass of the people disaffected to the Church of their fathers, and created a rankling feeling of injury in their breasts to the heritors who had forced on the settlement, Ebenezer Erskine, and those brethren who along with him espoused the cause of the congregation at Aberdour, tabled a clear, able, and dignified protest against the Synod's decision. This paper, to which I have been much indebted in drawing up the narrative I have now laid before you, is too long to read, and, from its technical character, would, I fear, prove wearisome to a general audience, but I shall give you its closing sentences: 'The Synod having now voted the approbation of that call, and ordered Mr. Liston's settlement thereon, notwithstanding the weighty objections offered against it, and the opposition of the eldership and body of that congregation, we fear the deed of the Synod (though not so intended by them) may be interpreted as an homologation of the usurped powers of Patrons, or may prove a dangerous precedent for countenancing Heritors and others who may incline to invade the Rights and Liberties of the Church, and obtrude ministers on Christian congregations without their call, yea,

against their mind, in direct opposition to the Word of God, our Books of Discipline, and Standing Acts of the General Assembly. And, considering that ministers of the Gospel and Church Judicatories are bound by many sacred ties to maintain and defend the Rights and Liberties of Christian Churches, and of Christian Congregations, and that we are under strong apprehension of the bad consequences of this sentence, not only in the parish of Aberdour, but elsewhere: Therefore we now beg leave hereby to protest that we are not chargeable with them, and that this sentence shall not be impleaded as a precedent in time coming.'[1]

These words read like a prophecy, and the sad forebodings they express proved only too well grounded. From one infatuated step to another the dominant party in the Church proceeded, till they refused even to receive such a protest as this, which saved the consciences of those who were not chargeable with the wrong done. And when the domain of conscience was thus ruthlessly invaded, Ebenezer Erskine led the way to the formation of the Secession Church, in which the rights of the Christian people and the inviolability of the consciences of ministers could both be preserved. The forced settlement at Aberdour proved one of the wedges by which the old Church of Scotland was rent in twain. This case, moreover, explains the fact, otherwise so inexplicable, that, when Dissenting Meeting-Houses were opened in Burntisland and Inverkeithing, the church-going inhabitants of Aberdour flocked eastwards and westwards, and connected themselves with these congregations. The story is told that, on a certain Sabbath-day, a servant at the manse said to the minister's wife that the whole people of the village seemed to be flocking to Burntisland. 'And did you notice,' was the reply, 'whether they were carrying the stipend on their back?' 'No,' said the unsophisticated damsel; 'I did not see that.' 'Then,' rejoined the matron, 'let them go!' According

[1] See Appendix IV.

to this view, little was lost if the stipend were but saved. Miserable standard! The people were carrying with them a sense of the oppression that worldly-minded heritors and hireling pastors had imposed; they were also carrying the principles of their persecuted forefathers, which had been bought with blood; and they were carrying with them an unsullied conscience, which no amount of money can purchase.

There is no more dreary period in the whole ecclesiastical annals of the parish than that which refers to the incumbency of the elder Mr. Liston—for, as you are no doubt aware, he was succeeded by his son, Mr. Robert Liston. Let me glean from the Session Record such 'notices as demand comment. We have no written statement by means of which we might discover what the doctrines were which the elder Mr. Liston preached to the small body of parishioners who still waited on his ministry; and there are hardly any Acts of Session that bear directly on the question of practical religion. Occasionally, however, we have gleams of light that do reveal something of the kind. Here is an extract from the Record, so peculiar in its way that we have seen almost nothing, of that or any other period, to match it:—

August 30, 1724.—'It being reported that David Allan, Robert Thomson, and John Reid had broken the Sabbath-day by stealing apples on that day, they were cited, and compearing they all acknowledged that it was only eleven of the clock on Saturday night, and that they were very sorry it should so have happened, and promised never to border so near on that day again; and were exhorted to carry as Christians, to behave themselves as those that know that God will not let them go unpunished that break His day, without serious repentance.'

Now we may well be excused if, after reading this extract, we exclaim, with Trinculo, 'What have we here?' Three boys have been guilty of the theft of apples—a breach of the Eighth Commandment; and it is alleged that this crime

has been aggravated by the circumstance that the theft was committed on the Sabbath—thus involving a breach of the Fourth Commandment. The boys, however, deny that it was on Sabbath that they stole the apples—the deed was done no nearer Sabbath than eleven o'clock on Saturday night. And yet, although the theft is admitted, there is not a word said to them regarding the sin of stealing. It looks as if Mr. Liston and his three elders had seen nothing very far amiss in the act of theft, provided that it did not occur on the Sabbath, or very late on Saturday night, and so 'bordering near' the sacred day. The boys, too, you will have noticed, are not asked, and do not promise, not to steal again; they only engage that, should they go a-pilfering again, they will keep at a respectable distance from the Sabbath. Finally, they are exhorted to 'carry as Christians,' which, in the light of the context, they are entitled to regard themselves as doing, if they are so self-denying as not to do what is wrong on Sabbath. Anything more confused than this, either in an intellectual or moral point of view, it is hardly possible to conceive, in connection with the proceedings of a court of conscience.

There is not a word in the Minutes about the ministration of the Lord's Supper from the time of Mr. Liston's ordination, in 1723, till the year 1728. The same may be said of the period from 1736 to 1742; and, when regular notices appear, it is evident that the observance occurs only once every alternate year. There are many evidences, throughout both these periods, of deep disaffection to Mr. Liston's ministry. At one time several heads of families are cited before the Presbytery for going to Dunfermline to get baptism for their children. At another time, it is enacted by the Session, that the poor who absent themselves from the parish church and from pastoral examinations shall get no allowance from the poor's fund. And, in 1738, there are frequent notices of elders who have 'deserted,' as it is called; by which we are, no doubt, to understand that

they have gone off to join the Dissenters. In this connection we may say that some of the elders who remained would not have been greatly missed had *they* taken their departure, if we may judge of their qualifications from the following instance :—

January 2, 1743.—'This day the Session was informed that John Millar, one of the members thereof, did, on the 24th of the last month, throw down Hugh Marshal, another of the members of the Session, from a chair in William Anderson his house, and threatened to beat him, with a staff in his hand, and said twice [using a profane oath] that he would beat him and all that were with him.' The Session, being much moved at this, appointed another diet to consider the affair, and that John Millar should be cited to compear before them on the 9th instant.

The 9th instant came, and with it came John Millar, acknowledging all that had been laid to his charge, with the exception of the oath, which he rather thought he did not use. But 'the Session having considered the affair, were all of the mind that he deserved deposition.' Accordingly they did depose him from being an elder in the parish; and 'this being intimate to John, he departed.'

A few notices of the management of the poor at this time may be interesting. There is a singular entry, of date June 21st, 1724—that is, within a year from the time when Mr. Liston was settled as minister of the parish. It runs as follows :—'This day it was thought fit that some application should be made to the Sessions of Dalgety and Burntisland, that they may contribute something, as they can spare, for the relief of our poor, since our poor are daily increasing here.' Now, we are naturally led to inquire what the meaning of this can be. That the poor were daily increasing in the parish at the time may be taken for granted, seeing the Session tell us that such is the case. But the question remains whether they had no funds of their own to meet the increasing demand thus caused, that they

should go a-begging from other parishes. Little more than three years had passed since the time we marked a great accumulation of money in the Box. Was this store now exhausted? Far from it. Many of the bonds in favour of the Session are still lying in the Box; for the Minutes show that the interest is regularly coming in. And there is the same evidence to show that, since Mr. Liston's settlement down to the date of this strange Minute, no less a sum than 850 marks have been lent at interest. Stranger still, within two months from the date of the begging Minute, other 400 marks are lent on interest. And, to crown the whole, in the course of a few years after this, the Session purchase three houses from Andrew Moyes for the sum of 1550 marks. It is easy to tell from what source these accumulated funds mainly came: it was from mortcloth dues. The inhabitants of the parish seem to have attached vast importance to the velvet covering under which the dead were carried to their long home. I mentioned that, during the last three months of Mr. Scot's ministry, the mortcloth dues amounted to about £50 a year. During the first three years of Mr. Liston's ministry, the amount raised from this source was £199, 17s., or little short of £70 a year. And yet in the face of such facts, Mr. Liston, in concert with the other members of Session, went a-begging from the parishes of Dalgety and Burntisland! This was not the way to elevate the cause of morality in the parish, or to keep alive the spirit of independence.

It is a dull, cold, dead period of the history of the parish with which we are now dealing, and although the truth must be told, we shall not linger over it a minute longer than we can possibly help. It is a curious glimpse of the state of the parish that we get in the following Minute:—

August 27, 1725.—'This day some of our Heritors and their Representatives—viz.: the Laird of Cuthilhill, the Laird of Balram, Henry Stevenson of Templehall, Mr. Alexander Christie, for the Earl of Morton, met with the

Session, by desire of the Justices of Peace, to consider the case of the poor of the parish; there being so many sturdy beggars going, that few can serve them all, and a great many thefts, etc., committed by them. They at length came to this, that each poor person should have some badge or mark, having on the one side "Aberdour," and on the other "Parish," and that this badge is to be made of lead, and every poor person that begs, belonging to the parish, shall be acquainted not to go out of the bounds thereof, otherwise they will be proceeded with according to the Acts made against Beggars. The constables were also told to do their duty.'

Such a Minute as this shows us how it was practicable to keep the poor on such a pittance as was then doled out to them by Kirk-Sessions. It was evidently intended, in the case of all who could move about, that the allowance given should be supplemented by begging. And it was a very unusual thing indeed, for such as went a-begging, and had some amount of physical strength, to confine their operations entirely to their own parish. Instances occur in which a good deal of trouble was given to the parish authorities, even by cripples, who had taken it into their heads to wander about over a pretty wide area. A Minute, of date November 3d, 1723, tells us 'the Session allowed Robert Fleming two marks Scots, to buy a slead to carry away the cripples that come to the town.' We are not to suppose from this that wheeled conveyances were at that time entirely unknown in the parish; although a considerable amount of agricultural work was performed by means of sledges. But it was probably thought good policy on the part of the parochial authorities to adhere to the use of the 'slead' in transporting beggars. The roads were of course very rough; the main street of the village being at that time causeyed in the middle, in a similar way to what you may still see in the Coal-wynd. And as the 'slead,' laden with cripples, went bumping along, the

honour of this mode of conveyance would far transcend its comfort. In addition to which, there falls to be considered the great tendency on the part of the travellers to fall off the sledge from behind, in going up a very steep hill; and the still greater evil of rolling off in front, while going down the hill on the other side. I most sincerely believe that a single ride on Robert Fleming's 'slead' would, in the case of the soundest in limb among us, have been sufficient to cure us of any lingering desire for a repetition of the honour.

An old mode of conveyance suggests to our mind an old form of disease, referred to in the Minutes about the same time, when Robert Weems got five pounds Scots to help to nurse his child, 'because his wife was weak, and sore distressed with an ague.' Agues contracted in this country are, I suppose, nearly as rare now as native sledges. Before bidding good-bye to Mr. John Liston and his time, let me mention one or two little incidents, which show to what kind of foreign objects the people were sometimes asked to contribute of their means.

November 3, 1723.—'This day the Session was informed that a collection had been made in other parishes for the poor distressed Protestants in Saxony; which they took into their serious consideration, and appointed that the recommendation of the General Assembly for that effect be read out of the pulpit the next Lord's day, and that the Sabbath after shall be appointed for that pious contribution.' The collection was made accordingly, and five pounds Scots contributed.

June 7, 1724.—'This day a recommendation, from the Assembly and Presbytery, for a collection for building a kirk for the Presbyterians in New York, was read in the Session, and appointed to be read on Sabbath next.' For this object four pounds were collected.

At another time, 'Christian Fandy, a man skilled in Oriental languages, who has been cruelly used by the

Turks,' comes in for a collection of three shillings; while public works at home, just as we saw in the previous century, still get the contributions of the people in a congregational capacity. In this way, during Mr. John Liston's time, there are collections in aid of the harbours of St. Andrews and Arbroath, the bridge over the Stinchar—a stream that Burns was by and by to render famous,—the Edinburgh Infirmary, and other similar objects. There is also a notice, in 1736, of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge. But one cannot help lamenting the indifference displayed to missionary effort among the heathen, notices of which, in those old days, are conspicuous only by their absence.

There is no reference in the Minutes to any interruption caused by the Rebellion of 1745, in which the young Pretender figured; although there must no doubt have been days of stirring interest connected with that season of turmoil.

Mr. John Liston died on the 17th of September 1764. I should perhaps have noticed at an earlier stage that he was the son of William Liston, farmer at Newliston, and that he was licensed by the Presbytery of Linlithgow, on the 11th of September 1717. He had been presented to the parish of Kirkmahoe, by the Duke of Queensberry, in 1720, but this presentation did not take effect, and we have already seen that he was ordained minister of Aberdour in 1723. For ten years before his death he had the assistance of his son Robert as colleague and successor.

Mr. Robert Liston, thus referred to, had been a student of the University of Edinburgh, was licensed by the Presbytery of Dunfermline on 5th September 1753, and was ordained as colleague to his father on 2d April 1754. He was in many respects superior to his father, and reached the distinction of being Moderator of the General Assembly in the year 1787,—the last who filled the Moderator's chair without having the degree of Doctor of Divinity. There

is, however, little of much interest in the Minutes of Kirk-Session during his incumbency that makes it necessary for us to linger over them. They deal chiefly with details regarding the secularities with which the Session had to concern themselves, and cases of discipline, which, we regret to say, reveal a very low state of morality among the people. We have no Acts bearing on the spiritual and moral elevation of the people, such as those which distinguished the ministry of Mr. Donaldson of Dalgety, to which, in another series of lectures, I called your attention some time ago.[1] Indeed, the religious condition of the people, which ought to be the paramount object of the Kirk-Session's care, is hardly ever noticed. There are, however, a few matters of local interest, which, were they important enough, might be related with the greatest minuteness of detail. If any one wishes to immortalise himself by a description of the Aberdour mortcloth—the source of so much revenue in those days,—he will find the amplest materials for the task in these Records, the Genoa velvet that formed the staple of the article, the shalloon that was necessary in order to make it up with effect; and the fringes that gave the finishing touch of adornment to it. All these are detailed, and dwelt on with the most scrupulous care; and the number of the loops and buttons is told with as much exactitude as if they had belonged to the ephod of the High Priest in the days of the old economy. Or if any one wishes to acquaint himself with all the agony of mind which Mr. Robert Liston underwent in order to procure a decent church bell, in these Minutes will be found all the acts and scenes that go to form the tragedy: how he had, first of all, two small bells, which together weighed 197 lb.; and how, on no fewer than three inevitable occasions, the bells cracked after being re-cast; and how at length a bell of perfectly new metal was got,

[1] See *Glimpses of Pastoral Work in Covenanting Times*. London: James Nisbet and Co. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1877.

weighing 197½ lb., at 18d. per pound, costing, with expenses, £17, 18s. 9d., or, deducting the value of old metal, £11, 7s. 5d.; and how the new bell was hung in the belfry; and how at length the belfry, following the example of the earlier bells, cracked; and how, after that, the bell was swung up on an old ash-tree. All this is told with such religious scrupulosity, that to repeat it would set your very ears a-ringing!

But there are notices of other matters in the Minutes which are both interesting and important; and of such a nature are references to times of dearth and famine. The year 1757 was remarkable for the scarcity and dearth of provisions. In the month of May of that year the Session considered 'the melancholy and crying condition of the poor in the parish,' and agreed to purchase ten or twelve bolls of meal to be distributed among them. Mr. Liston wrote to Mr. Chambers, merchant in Edinburgh, about the matter; but he was unable to supply the meal. He informed the Session, however, that he had good 'pease,' which he could sell at twenty shillings sterling per boll; whereupon the Session ordered ten bolls. When the pease arrived, they were sent, in equal quantities, to the Upper and Nether Mills to be ground, and a list of needy people was made who were to receive a stated portion weekly.

The year 1773 was also a very trying one for the poor, and the funds at the disposal of the Session seem to have been inadequate to meet the great demand. With a view to show this, the Session prepared a statement of their income and expenditure, to be laid before the heritors. From this summary it appears that the Session's income from land and house-rent amounted to £8, 3s. 4d.—sterling money, no doubt; and that the ordinary collections, with marriage and mortcloth dues, amounted to £13,—making in all £21, 3s. 4d. From this sum there fell to be deducted, for feu and vicarage duty, Session-Clerk's salary, Synod and Presbytery dues, and Beddel's allowance,

£3, os. 4d., leaving for the support of the poor £18. The Session, in submitting this summary, declare that 'the necessitous have not been, and never are, half supplied by all that is in the Session's hands to give.' To Lord Moray's credit it has to be said that he was the only one of the heritors who responded to this appeal, and he did so in a very substantial way, by giving twelve bolls of oats.

There was likewise much suffering among the poor in the years 1782-83. In addition to ten persons on the roll of paupers, there were nineteen getting occasional relief. The heritors did the poor a great service at this time by purchasing meal, and selling it considerably below the cost price.

A few years later the parish suffered from a visitation of a different kind. A species of fever made its appearance about the beginning of the month of June 1790, and continued, with little intermission, till January 1791. About a fourth part of the inhabitants suffered from it.

From the accurate and detailed Statistical Account of the parish, which Mr. Robert Liston contributed to Sir John Sinclair's great work, it is possible, even at this distant date, to reproduce pretty fully the state of the parish towards the close of the eighteenth century. The Wester Village projected itself, at the east end of the main street, nearly down to the old bridge, and there the houses of the Easter Village began, and continued the line, sweeping round the north shoulder of the Castle knoll. Many of the houses on both sides of the Dour, but especially in the Easter Village, were of a superior kind, telling both of the desire for comfort, and the possession of the means for obtaining it. A good solid causey—although of a somewhat rough kind, as we have already hinted—had run throughout the entire length of the village, but before 1792 it had given place to a modern Macadamised road. And Mr. Liston, for one, does not approve of the change; for he thinks it

makes the houses on both sides of the street damp in winter, and chokes the people with dust in summer. You hear the rattle of the looms as, in imagination, you walk along the street. When all the shuttles are in full play, you may hear the click of thirty-six of them. You enter into conversation with one of the weavers, and find him a very intelligent man. Invited into his loom-shop, you see, without needing to ask, that the chief manufacture of the village is a coarse kind of linen cloth, and a species of ticking; and your friend the weaver tells you that about 530 of these webs are turned out of the village looms in the course of a year,—more than ten every week; and with his feet still resting on the treadles, and looking over his glasses at you, he says there are from seventy to eighty yards in each of these webs. Going out to the street, you hear the birr of ever so many wheels, by means of which the wives, or daughters, or sisters of the weavers, are preparing the pirns for their use, and you begin to see what a number of persons this weaving trade keeps busy and supports. Passing an open door, you see a woman spinning lint on the two-handed wheel. You ask her what she earns in the day at this kind of work, to which she replies, from sixpence to eightpence, according as she is more or less busy. What a number seem to be employed in spinning! But this is not all. As you pass along the bridge—long ago a ruin—on your way to the Wester Village, you see what a number of webs and hanks of yarn are spread on both banks of the burn for the purpose of being bleached; and the little stream purls none the less sweetly, and the trees look none the less fresh and beautiful, and the Castle none the less lordly, because the traces of industry are there, and the pleasant murmur of human voices, and the happy laugh of children. But you have not traced all the ramifications of the weaving trade yet. You see these fields of lint, with flowers of azure hue, which meet you at every turn in approaching the village. A good many of the

inhabitants get employment there at different seasons of the year, although, perhaps, better-paying crops have now taken their place. And as the master weaver, who employs several hands, flourishes, he gets masons and carpenters to build new houses for him, or repair the old. You ask the masons who are busy at a new house what their wages are a day; and the carpenters and they answer at the same time that their wages are alike—eighteenpence a day. You put the same question to a tailor who has stopped to speak to one of the masons, and he tells you that he works in the homes of his employers, and for a day's sewing gets sixpence and his food.

You saunter down to the shore, and wonder that you see no carts conveying coals to the harbour. You are told that work at the parish coal-pits is suspended at present. Making inquiry as to the price of coal at the nearest colliery, you learn that it is sixpence for the load of eighteen stones. You have at length reached the harbour, and getting into conversation with a seaman standing by, you ask him how many of his craft there are in the village. He tells you that if all the vessels belonging to the village were hauled on shore at the 'Auld Moorins,' and a muster made of the seamen, there would be found about sixty of them. This, you conclude, must bring a good deal of comfort into the village; and the old wives are beginning to relish the tea and other dainties that their husbands or sons bring them; and there are a few things in the village which the exciseman would like to see, but will never be the better for knowing. Sauntering up in the direction of the main street again, you meet a farmer in the Coal-wynd, and puzzle him by asking how many of his class there are in the parish. He counts his fingers over several times, and tells you there are twenty-three, and that the real rental of the parish is £2600. You would like to know what the arable ground in the parish brings, in the shape of rent. He tells you that forty shillings the acre is a fair price for the most of

it; but some of it near the village is let at fifty shillings, and even as high as sixty-five. You wish to know how many ploughs there are in the parish. He owns himself fairly beat, but after a little conference with a neighbour farmer, who is met as he is going to the harbour, he informs you that there are fifty-eight, and that eighteen of them are drawn on the village acres, which extend westwards as far as the Dounans—Lord Moray's avenue being as yet unformed. You put a few queries regarding the wages of agricultural labourers, and find that, when hired for short periods, their wages run from eightpence to fourteenpence a day; but when hired from term to term the wages of male farm-servants are from five to eight pounds a year, and of female servants from two to three pounds, with their food in both cases. You ask how many ale-houses there are in the parish, and discover that there are five. Finally, you are solicitous to know what the population of the parish is, and are assured that just two years ago—that is, in 1790—the Census was taken, when it was found that the number of inhabitants in the village was 840, and in the landward part of the parish 440—1280 in all.

How strange to think that this was really the state of the parish within the lifetime of some of the oldest men who are hearing me to-night—who, if they in their turn were questioned, could tell strange stories of the herring fishery at Aberdour and other places on the Firth, first discovered by old John Brown at Donibristle. But this, and other matters that come up along with it, are not within the period with which it is our business to deal. Yet, think of it again: all those busy looms are silent now, and they who plied them are silent too in the churchyard. There is no bleaching of webs or yarn now on the banks of the Dour. Where is the shipping of the place, and where the sailors? Where, it may be asked, is the trade of the place? and what is to become of the people when the trade is entirely gone?

Now I must say I do not cherish gloomy forebodings as the result of these questions being put. The aspect of village affairs has often changed during the past years. These changes are really due to general progress ; the next may be for the better. The exquisite beauty of the place must ever make it a popular resort in summer, and if its intensely interesting history were only known, and if the Monastery of Inchcolme, the Hospital of St. Martha, the old Church and Castle, and other interesting relics of the past, were only, to the mind's eye, peopled with the forms that once made them instinct with life, a new charm would be added to the many which the neighbourhood already has.

But with all the interest which I have in the things of the past, and the lessons they are fitted to teach, I would on no account have them back just as they were. If all the 'outs and ins' of those old days had come as closely and fully before your eyes as they have come before mine, you would not sigh for them either. The good that characterised the past is often unconsciously exaggerated by the aged, while the disagreeable and the bad are forgotten. In many things we are far ahead of those who lived at the close of the eighteenth century. Shame on us, if this were not the case ! But let us at the same time not forget that there are many noble lessons taught us in the annals of the past, by which we ought to profit.

Before letting the curtain fall on the Rev. Robert Liston, it should be mentioned that he died on the 11th of February 1796, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the forty-second of his ministry ; and his widow, who was a daughter of Mr. Henry Hardie, minister of Culross, died at the close of the year 1814. They had five sons and five daughters. Two of these sons became ministers,—Henry, at Ecclesmachan, and William at Redgorton. Robert Liston, the celebrated surgeon, was a son of the former, and descendants of the latter have also distinguished themselves. Mr. Liston was

succeeded in the parish of Aberdour by the Rev. William Bryce, a son of the Rev. Alexander Bryce of Kirknewton. He was presented to the charge by George, Earl of Morton, and ordained in 1796. He had the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of St. Andrews in 1820, and held the appointments of one of His Majesty's Chaplains in Ordinary, and one of the Deans of the Chapel-Royal. But, for various reasons, I am not to prosecute these researches further than the close of the ministry of the Rev. Robert Liston.

There are, however, a few things connected with that period which still demand a hasty glance. Near the close of last century the threatened invasion of Britain by the French called forth a burst of loyalty, which surprised even the friends of our country, and made her enemies look aghast. And this feeling of loyalty, in accordance with the genius of our countrymen, took a very practical turn throughout the length and breadth of the land, and found decided expression in our own parish. For, the formation of the Aberdour corps of Volunteers was only one of a thousand similar demonstrations that told of devotion to King and Country. The corps began to drill on the 31st of July 1798, when their services were declared to be accepted; and they were not disbanded till 1802. The officers of the corps were Captain Hugh Coventry, Lieutenant James Stuart, and Ensign David Cunningham; and the number of volunteers was seventy. I believe I am speaking to some who remember their evolutions in the 'Volunteers' Park,' as it came to be called. I find that only six members of the corps are now (1863) alive, viz. James Law, Adam Brown, Gavin White, Robert M'Cartney, and Andrew Grieve. The motto on the colours is an admirable one: *Fidens in animis, atque in utrumque paratus* —Trustful in soul, and prepared for whatever may happen —a motto that has a still higher application, when used in reference to a still nobler kind of warfare.

There are a few names connected with Aberdour, either by birth or residence in it, which one likes to recall as reflecting honour on the place. I have already referred to the sons of the Rev. Robert Liston. From among the common people sprang George Bennet, who wrought at the trade of a carpenter in the village, ere the insatiable love of learning, which he unmistakably displayed, led him to college halls. He was a man of remarkable scholarly attainments, and had he published nothing more than his *View of the Intermediate State, as it appears in the Records of the Old and New Testaments, the Apocryphal Books, in Heathen Authors, and the Greek and Latin Fathers*, it would have given him a high place among scholars. Bishop Horsley says of this book, which was published in 1800, that 'it is a work of various erudition and deep research.' Mr. Bennet was a minister of the Gospel at Carlisle, and his son became minister of the parish of Closeburn in Dumfriesshire. It may not be known to all of you that a volume on Political Economy was written in our village by Mr. Syme, uncle of the distinguished surgeon and professor of that name. And I may recall the fact, mentioned at an earlier stage, and in another connection, that Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, authoress of *Letters on Education*, *The Cottagers of Glenburnie*, and other works, not only lived for a time in the parish, but drew from the neighbourhood many of the scenes depicted in the last-named book,—although we have no wish to claim the prototype of Mrs. M'Clarty as a parishioner. James Stuart of Dunearn, a cadet of the Moray family, has some claim as an author on our notice. His name is unfortunately linked with the duel in which Sir Alexander Boswell fell at Auchtertool. Mr. Stuart long lived in our parish, at Hillside, the grounds of which he greatly beautified. After the melancholy incident to which I have alluded, he travelled in the United States, and afterwards wrote two volumes, giving a description of his wanderings. These volumes are specially inviting to those who know this

neighbourhood, as objects of interest in America are frequently compared or contrasted with familiar objects in our own landscapes. There is another name that I must not pass over, for, although not an author himself, a descendant of his became famous as a theologian. In 1774 one of the Rev. Mr. Liston's elders was Andrew Cunningham, gardener to Lord Morton at Aberdour Castle. He appears to have been a man of superior education, for we frequently find him acting as Session-Clerk. This Andrew Cunningham was the grandfather of Principal Cunningham of Edinburgh—one of the greatest theologians which our country has produced.

And now I have finished my self-imposed task of telling you something of what I have learned of the history of Aberdour and Inchcolme; and I confess that it is with some feeling of sadness that, after travelling with you through nearly seven centuries, my labours in this domain are over. What at one time was a somewhat obscure region has had some light shed on it, and what at first was to my mind a dim, uninhabited district, has been peopled with forms which look as if I had known them long. May I indulge the hope that it has not been entirely in vain that so many hours have been spent in trying to reproduce the past of our neighbourhood? It shall not have been in vain if to any considerable extent it helps on in the parish the causes which it has been my wish ever to keep prominently in view in my humble labours,—the cause of intellectual progress, the cause of social amelioration, the cause of moral purity, and the cause of religion.

28-4-18

APPENDIX.

I.

LORD MORTON'S VAULT IN THE OLD CHURCH.

(*See page* 33.)

THE author examined this vault on the 14th of October 1857, along with Mr. James Barr, Lord Morton's land-steward. The flat covering of it rises a good many feet above the level of the church floor; and above it there had been a loft or gallery. The vault is divided into two compartments, north and south. In the north compartment there were at that time eight coffins, with the following inscriptions:—

1. AGATHAE HALYBURTON, MULIERIS PRAESTANTISSIMAE, JACOBI DOUGLAS, COMITIS DE MORTON, UXORIS DILECTISSIMAE, MORTALES EXUVIAE, NAT. XII JUNII, A.D. MDCCX. OBIIT XII DECEMB. A.D. MDCCXLVIII. The translation is: 'The mortal remains of Agatha Halyburton, a most excellent woman, and the beloved wife of James Douglas, Earl of Morton. Born 12th June 1710, and died 12th December 1748.' Countess Agatha is laid in one of the compartments of a double leaden coffin—the Earl intending to be himself laid in the other. But his Lordship, who was the ninth Earl of the house of Lochleven, married again, which accounts for the other compartment of the coffin being vacant.

2. The Earl's own coffin is, however, near, bearing the following inscription: THE RIGHT HON^{BLE} JAMES, EARL OF MORTON, DIED 13TH OCTOBER 1768, AGED 66. The motto, LOCK SICKER, is on the coffin plates, with the coat

of arms. By Agatha, daughter of James Halyburton of Pitcur, he had five sons and two daughters, five of whom died young. The coffins of two of these are in the vault, with the inscriptions which follow :—

3. THE LADY FRANCES DOUGLAS, ELDEST DAUGHTER TO JAMES, EARL OF MORTON, BY DAME AGATHA HALYBURTON. BORN 16TH DAY OF JUNE 1733. DIED THE NINTH DAY OF MAY 1739.

4. GEORGE DOUGLAS, FOURTH SON OF JAMES DOUGLAS AND AGATHA HALYBURTON, EARL AND COUNTESS OF MORTON. BORN 19TH DAY OF SEPT. 1738. DIED 8TH OF JUNE 1744.

5. The second son of the above-named Earl and Countess, the tenth Earl, is also buried here. The inscription on his coffin is, THE RIGHT HON^{BLE} SHOLTO CHARLES DOUGLAS, EARL OF MORTON. DIED AT JAORMINA, IN SICILY, 25TH SEPT. 1774, IN THE 45TH YEAR OF HIS AGE.

6. The widow of this Earl is buried beside him; the inscription on her coffin being as follows :—THE RIGHT HON. KATHARINE, COUNTESS DOWAGER OF MORTON. DIED 25TH APRIL 1823, IN HER 87TH YEAR. She was the daughter of Thomas, sixth Earl of Haddington.

The other coffins are those of two sisters of Dame Agatha Halyburton. The inscriptions are as follows :—

7. THE RIGHT HON. MARY HALYBURTON, DOWAGER COUNTESS OF ABOYNE. DIED 25TH DEC. 1816. AGED 80.

8. AGNES HALYBURTON, WIDOW OF JAMES SMOLLETT OF BONHILL, DAUGHTER OF JAMES HALYBURTON OF PITCUR, BY MARY DRUMMOND, DAUGHTER OF GEORGE DRUMMOND OF BLAIR. BORN JAN. 1, 1712. DIED AUG. 5, 1742.

II.

ERECTION OF ABERDOUR-WESTER INTO A BURGH OF BARONY.

(*See pages* 101, 140.)

THE charter of James the Fourth erecting Aberdour-Wester into a Burgh of Barony is recorded in the Register House. It is of date 18th March 1500. The King desires it to be known that it is because of the special devotion he cherishes for the memory of the Blessed Confessor, St. Columba, and the favour he bears to the Venerable Father in Christ, Thomas, Abbot of the Monastery of St. Colme's Inch, and the other members of the Convent, as well as for the advantage of his Majesty's lieges travelling between different parts of his kingdom, and especially those resorting to Queensferry, that he grants the usual privileges accorded to a Burgh of Barony on the inhabitants of Aberdour-Wester. Among these privileges are enumerated the right of buying and selling wine, wax, and woollen and linen cloth; the right to have bakers, brewers, butchers, vendors of fish and flesh, and workmen of other trades; the right, on the part of the Abbot and his successors in office, to appoint bailies and other officers for the government of the burgh; the right to possess a cross and market-place; to hold a weekly market on Saturday, and a yearly public fair on St. Columba's Day, and throughout the octaves of it; and all other rights and privileges belonging to a free burgh of barony within the kingdom.

CARTA ERECTIONIS VILLE DE ABERDOUR LIBERUM BURGUM IN BARONIA.

Jacobus Dei gracia Rex Scotorum omnibus probis hominibus tocius terre sue, clericis et laicis salutem : Sciatis

quia pro speciali devocione quam habemus beato Confessori Sancto Columbe, ac pro favore quem gerimus erga venerabilem in Christo patrem, Thomam Abbatem Monasterij nostri insule Sancti Columbe, et oratores nostros conventum ejusdem, necnon pro hospitio, supportacione et utilitate, ligeorum nostrorum venientium et perambulantium, tam per terram quam mare, a diversis regni nostri partibus, et illorum presertim qui confluunt ad portum maris nuncupatum lieQuenisferry et revertuntur ab eodem, infeodavimus, creavimus et fecimus et hac presenti carta nostra infeodamus, creamus et facimus occidentalem villam de Aberdour cum pertinentiis dictis Abbati et Conventui spectantem liberum burgum in Baronia pro perpetuo: Concessimus etiam, et hac presenti carta nostra concedimus, inhabitantibus dictum burgum, et imposterum inhabitaturis, plenariam potestatem et liberam facultatem emendi et vendendi in ipso burgo vina, ceram, pannum laneum et lineum latum et arctum, aliaque mercimonia quecunque, cum potestate et libertate habendi et tenendi pistores, brasiatores, carnifices, et tam carnium quam piscium macellarios, aliosque artium operarios ad libertatem burgi in baronia qualitercunque spectantium et pertinentium: Concessimus etiam, et hac presenti carta nostra concedimus, ut in dicto burgo sint burgenses, et quod dictus venerabilis in Christo pater, et successores sui dicti monasterij Abbates, potestatem habeat et habeant perpetuis futuris temporibus elegendi, faciendi, constituendi ballivos et alios officiarios pro gubernatione dicti burgi necessarios: necnon concedimus et hac presenti [*lacuna in recorded copy*] et inhabitantibus dictum burgum ut in ipso habeant, teneant et possideant pro perpetuo; crucem et forum die sabbati singulis ebdomadis, et nundinas publicas singulis annis die Sancti Columbe et per octavas ejusdem, cum omnibus libertatibus ad predictas nundinas spectantibus seu juste spectare valentibus quomodolibet in futurum: Tenendam et habendam predictam Occidentalem Villam de Aberdour, cum bondis et pertinentiis ejusdem perpetuis

futuris temporibus, in merum burgum in baronia, cum supra-scriptis privilegiis, libertatibus et concessionibus ac universis aliis libertatibus, proficuis et pertinentiis, tam non nominatis quam nominatis, ad burgum in baronia spectantibus seu juste spectare valentibus quomodolibet in futurum, et adeo libere, in omnibus et per omnia, sicut aliquis Burgus in Baronia infra Regnum nostrum alicui infeodatur, conceditur seu tenetur, sine aliqua revocacione aut contradictione quacunque. In cujus rei testimonium presenti carte nostre magnum sigillum nostrum apponi precepimus Testibus ut in carta immediate precedente : apud Edinburgh decimo octavo die mensis Marcii Anno Domini Millesimo quingentesimo et regni nostri decimo tertio.

III.

THE MURDER OF THE BONNY EARL OF MORAY.

(*See page* 147.)

THE leading facts connected with the murder of the Bonny Earl are well known, but there are some interesting incidents connected with his tragic end which are either omitted, or imperfectly told, in even our standard histories.

From *Fragments of Scottish History—Birrel's Diary*, we cull the following graphic account of the murder :—

'1592 [1591-2] Feb. 7.—The 7 of Februarii the Earle of Huntlie came to the hous of Dunnibirsell in Fyffe, quher the Earle of Murray, with a few number, wes for the tyme, being his awen hous. The chieffe man yat ves vith him ves Dumbar, Shriffe of Murray. The Earll of Huntley sett ye said hous on fyre, The Earll of Murray being vithin, vist not quhither to come out and be slaine, or be burned quicke : yet, after advysment this Dumbar says to my lord of Murray, I vill goe out at y^e^ gaitt before your lordshipe,

and I am sure the peopell will chairge on me, thinking me to be zour Lordshipe, sua, it being mirke under nycht, ze sall come out after me, and look if yat ye can fend for zourself. In the meine tyme, this Dumbar, tutor to y^e^ shriffe of Murray, came furth, and ran desperatly among the Earle of Huntleys folks, and they all rane upone him, and presently slew him. During this broyle with Dumbar, the Earle of Murray came running out at y^e^ gait of Dunibirsell, quhilk stands besyde y^e^ sea, and ther sat him doune among y^e^ rockes, thinking to have beine safe; but unfortunattly the said Lord's cnapscull tippet, quherone ves a silk stringe, had taken fyre, vich betrayed him to hes enimies in y^e^ darknesse of y^e^ night, himselue not knowing the same: they came doune one him on a suddaine, and ther most cruelly, without mercey, murthered him.'

Touching the accuracy of this account, it has been objected that Dunbar, whose noble self-sacrifice is recorded, is in one place styled the 'Sheriff of Moray,' and in another merely 'Tutor to the Sheriff of Moray.' But an examination of Douglas's *Baronage*, p. 121, will show that Birrel with perfect accuracy styled Dunbar in both ways. The explanation is, that he was acting as tutor-in-law for his nephew, Sir Alexander Dunbar, who was heritable Sheriff, but under age; and it was quite a common thing for the Substitute to be called either 'Sheriff' or 'Tutor to the Sheriff.' Many incidents have been quoted from the annals of other nations to illustrate the disinterested character and the strength of genuine friendship; but few of them are so telling as this instance of self-sacrifice on the part of the Sheriff of Moray for the Bonny Earl.

Archbishop Spotswood tells us, in reference to the slaughter of the Earl: 'The clamours of the people, on this murder being known, were so great that the King, not esteeming it safe to abide at Edinburgh, removed with the Council to Glasgow. . . . The corpses of the Earl and the Sheriff were brought to the Church of Leith in two coffins,

and there lay divers months unburied, their friends refusing to commit their bodies to the earth till the slaughter was punished.' David Moysie says the corpses were brought over the water to Leith by Lady Doune, the Earl's mother, who intended to present them on the morrow to the King, who was believed by many to be implicated in the murder; but, becoming aware of this, he ordered the Magistrates of Leith to arrest the bodies, and not suffer them to be removed till his mind was known.

It was the intention of Lady Doune to cause the coffin of her son to be carried through Edinburgh, accompanied by a banner, on which the naked body of the Earl was represented, with a cloth round the loins, and exhibiting the marks of the deadly wounds he had received. This banner is still preserved at Donibristle, and has been seen by the writer. A scroll issues from the mouth, with the words 'GOD AVENGE MY CAUSE' inscribed on it, along with the date, 'Feb. 7, 1591,' and his age, 'Aetat. 24.'

In volume i. p. 191 of the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, there is a paper by David Laing containing notices of the Earl's funeral. From these it appears that in the month of May following the murder, a Royal command was issued, enjoining the Magistrates and Council of Edinburgh to bury the body where the Earl's relatives might appoint, and this under the pain of rebellion; yet for several years it remained unburied. At length, in February 1597-8, an order was issued, charging the relatives of the Earl, and those of John, Lord Maxwell, who had been slain by the Laird of Johnston in a Border feud, and whose body was lying in the same condition, to bury them under the pain of rebellion. Yet it is not known where the body of the Earl lies. In 1851 a search was made to ascertain whether he was buried in the Church of St. Giles, or at Dalgety, but with no definite result.

IV.

REASONS OF DISSENT FROM THE SENTENCE OF THE SYNOD OF FIFE SUSTAINING THE CALL TO MR. JOHN LISTON.

(*See page* 363.)

'WHEREAS the General Assembly 1644, in their Act concerning dissenting voices in Presbyteries and Synods, judge it necessary that if any members of Presbyteries or Synods find any thing carried by plurality of voices to any determination which they conceive to be contrary to the Word of God, the Acts of Assembly, or the received order of the Kirk, they urge their dissent to be marked in the Registers; and if that be refused, that they protest, as they would desire to be free of common censure with the rest. And we, humbly conceiving the sentence, sustaining the call given by the Patron and several Heritors, with two of the Elders and seventeen heads of families in the parish of Aberdour, to Mr. John Liston, in opposition to the call to Mr. Thomas Kay, by nine Elders, one Heritor, and the body of the people of that congregation (of which it was represented in the Synod, many were feuars), to be of that nature; and finding that our dutiful endeavours to prevent it by reasoning and proposals for accommodation, particularly by laying both aside, or referring the affair to the General Assembly (the first whereof the Reverend Synod had gone into in cases less urgent, namely, in the late competition of calls in the parishes of Abdy and Kilmeny), had proven ineffectual; and that there was no other way left for our due exoneration in a matter of such importance, and, as we fear, of dangerous consequence to the just rights and liberties of the Church, we were obliged, with all due deference to the very Reverend Synod, met *pro re nata*, to enter our dissent against the said sentence, immediately upon its being

carried by plurality of voices, craving leave our reasons thereof, *scripto*, in due time to be recorded, which accordingly we now offer, and are these following :—

'*Primo.* Orthodox divines, both in former and later times, particularly in our own Church, such as the reverend and learned Mr. David Calderwood, in his *Altare Damascenum* (page 326 to 333); Mr. George Gillespie, in the second chapter of his *Miscellany Questions;* Mr. Samuel Rutherfurd, in his *Due Right of Presbyteries* (pp. 201-202, 464); Mr. James Durham in his *Commentary on the Revelation* (pp. 53, 58, folio edition), concerning calling to the ministry; Principal Rule, in his *Rational Defence of Nonconformity* (section 6, p. 197, etc.); Principal Forrester, in his *Review* (p. 311) and *Appendix* (262); Mr. Alexander Lauder, in his book intituled *Ancient Bishops Considered* (page 317, etc.); and others, have made it evident, from Acts i. 15 to the close, Acts vi. 3, 5, Acts xiv. 23, Acts xv. 22, and other Scriptures, and solid reasons founded on the Word of God, as also from testimonies of Fathers, decrees of Councils, and the judgment of Reformed Churches, that Christian Congregations have undoubted right to choose and call their own pastors, and that their call is necessary to found the pastoral relation betwixt ministers and such Congregations. Whereas, in the present case, it is plain Mr. Liston's call to the parish of Aberdour is not the call of that Congregation; nine of eleven Elders which gave their voices having voted, and the generality of the heads of families having, by their subscription and otherwise, declared their concurrence for another at the moderation. And it's well known that the body of that people have been, and still are, utterly averse and opposed to Mr. Liston his settlement amongst them; so that it will be *dissentiente et renitente ecclesia*, and so directly contrary to the Word of God and the judgment of orthodox divines. And it cannot be denied that the congregation of Aberdour is Christian, having right to choose their own Pastor.

Indeed the carriage of a few women, at the moderation and the day thereafter, was very unchristian and offensive, and therefore justly testified against by the Reverend Synod. But this cannot be laid to the charge of the elders, or body of that people, especially when they witnessed their detestation and abhorrence thereof, as was declared before the Reverend Synod. And it's known that, in some of the best parishes of Scotland, when Curates were thrust in upon them, without their call, and against their inclination, some people violently opposed their settlement, and received them with showers of stones, as the Reverend Mr. Wodrow says (page 158 of his first volume), which practice he justly condemns, though against the Curates, adding this was not the practice of the religious or more judicious, but that such irregularities were committed by the more ignorant vulgar, while such as were really serious mourned in secret and were as doves in the valley. And such was the case, we doubt not, of the serious people in the parish of Aberdour. And we hope, yea, are very confident, the parish of Aberdour is no worse now, nor more unchristian, than when they gave a call to their late worthy pastor, the Rev. Alexander Scot, upon which call he was settled among them, though several Heritors, with the late Earl of Morton, opposed that settlement; yea, his Lordship protested against it, in time of the ordination. And when it's considered that the said congregation did enjoy the blessing of the Rev. Mr. Scot his faithful and painful ministry, about the space of twenty years, and were privileged with many solemn Communions, with which, and the Christian, serious, tender carriage of the people on the said occasions, sundry Reverend Ministers within this province have expressed their great satisfaction, we may conclude the number of the serious seekers of God is much increased there, and that this people do more deserve the character and privileges of a Christian congregation than formerly.

'2^do. This sentence appears to us to be contrary to the Book of Discipline and Acts of General Assembly, yea, of the Synod of Fife itself, as particularly: First Book of Discipline, 4th head, *Concerning Ministers and their Election*, it's expressly declared "that it appertains to the people, and to every several Congregation, to elect their ministers—for altogether this is to be avoided, that any man be violently intruded or thrust in upon any Congregation, but this liberty must, with all care, be reserved to every several Church to have their votes and suffrages in the election of their Ministers." And in the Second Book of Discipline, cap. iii., it is said, "Election is the choosing out of a person or persons most able to the office which vaikes, by the judgment of the Eldership and consent of the Congregation, to which shall be the person or persons appointed. In the order of election it is to be eschewed that any person be intruded or placed in the offices of the Kirk contrair to the will of the Congregation to which they are appointed, or without the voice of the eldership." And cap. 12, containing *several Heads of Reformation craved*, bears—'The liberty of election of persons called to ecclesiastical functions, and observed without interruption so long as the Kirk was not corrupted by Antichrist, we desire to be restored and retained within the Realm, so that none be intruded on any Congregation, either by the Prince or any inferior person, without lawful election, and the consent of the people over whom the person is placed, as the practice of the Apostolical and Primitive Kirk and good order craves." And the General Assembly 1638, sess. 23, art. 20, enacts "That no person be intruded in any office of this Kirk contrary to the will of the congregation to which they are appointed." And the General Assembly 1649, in their *Directory for the election of Ministers*, do appoint the Kirk-Session to go about the election of a pastor for the vacant congregation; and if the people shall acquiesce and consent to the person chosen by the Session, that the Presbytery proceed to his trial and ad-

mission, if found qualified, directing further what is to be done, in case the major or a lesser part dissent; and declaring that persons under the censure of the Church, or disaffected and malignant, shall have no hand in the election of a minister. Yea the Rev. Synod of Fife, met at Kirkcaldy, September 28, 1716, 'Considering the difficulties arising in planting congregations in this province, by reason of the grievances from the Act restoring Patronage, recommends to all the Presbyteries within their bounds, that they endeavour, as much as possible, the planting of parishes according to the order prescribed by Act of the General Assembly; and that they have a special care not to plant a minister in any congregation, until they have the desire and choice of at least the generality of the people made known to them, as being the proper ground for founding the pastoral relation." And, in September 1718, the Synod expressly discharged the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy to plant the parish of Ballingry, without the consent of the greater and better part of that congregation; which sentence was after approven and ratified by the Commission of the General Assembly, when that affair came before them. But it must be owned that the present call to Mr. Liston wants the election of the Eldership, and consent of the body of that Congregation, or even of the greater or better part thereof, and so is directly contrary to the Books of Discipline, the Acts of the General Assembly, yea of the Synod itself. And whereas it is alleged that the right of calling ministers has, since the Revolution, been lodged in Heritors and Elders, it is to be remembered that, as this alteration was not made by the Church, but by the State, without her advice or consent, so it has never been confirmed or approven by any standing Act of the General Assembly. Yea, a late overture looking that way *was* found so disagreeable to many Presbyteries, that the General Assembly 1721 did, in their great wisdom and justice, lay it aside. And it is not to be thought that this Church hath ever

acknowledged any other right in Heritors, as such, to call pastors, than merely civil; and that not privative but cumulative with respect to the right of Elders and Christian Congregations, which this Church has approved and expressly witnessed for since the Second Book of Discipline was formed. And, in congregations duly constituted and well-affected, ministers have been commonly ordained, ever since the Revolution, upon the call of the Eldership concurring with the Heritors, and consented unto by the greater and better part of the congregations, either expressly or tacitly. And if any instances be alleged in the contrary, instead of being pleadable as a precedent, they are to be disapproven,—Heritors having no right, as such, by the Word of God, Books of Discipline, and Acts of the General Assembly to call ministers, much less without the Eldership and Christian Congregation. Indeed, if Heritors were truly Christian in their principles and practice, they would not only be specially consulted, in calling ministers, as principal heads of Christian families, but also called and ordained to the office of Elders, and so have right, by the established Order of the Church, to elect and call pastors, whereas, alas! too many of them in our day, by their unsoundness in principle and unchristian conversation, render themselves not only unworthy of a room among Elders, but of Christian privileges; and so can have no just claim, by the Word of God and order of this Church, to a vote in this matter.

'3*tio.* Even if the Acts of Parliament, made after the Revolution, lodging the right of calling ministers in Protestant Heritors qualified according to law, and Elders, with the approbation of the people, were now in force, upon which the Synod seem to found their present sentence, Mr. Liston's call could not be sustained, in regard it not only wants the approbation of the Congregation, but also there were such relevant objections advanced against several of the Heritors subscribing that call, as, in our opinion,

deprives them of any legal title to vote in this affair. Such as, that two of them, namely, Kilrie and Colin Simpson, did so far discover their disaffection to the civil government as they joined in the late wicked rebellion; and further, that the first of these had neither signed Mr. Liston's call, nor given commission to any to vote or sign for him. And the last was further objected against, as having sold his land to the Earl of Morton. And also it was objected that Sir James Holburn and his son vote for a part of the lands of Couston, being a small enclosure, without a family or so much as any house thereon, which piece of ground is purchased and possessed by Sir John Henderson; and the only foundation on which both he and they do claim a vote as Heritors in that parish. And we must own it was surprising to us that when these objections were urged, the Rev. Synod was so far from entering upon a due consideration of them, that it was affirmed and pleaded by some, and generally acquiesced in, that it did not belong to them to judge on what ground persons pretended to be Heritors, and claimed a vote as such, that matter being of a civil nature. Whereas we did then, and do still think, that if calls were to proceed on the footing of the Acts of Parliament anent calling ministers, which also lodged in Kirk judicatories, the right of determining the legality of calls, that, by necessary consequence, it must belong to them to judge and determine who have right, as Heritors, to vote and subscribe in calls. And anent the objections which may be offered by competing parties *hinc inde* against the right of voters, without which they could not judge and sustain a call as legal, nor found a settlement thereupon. But though the Rev. Synod declined to determine in these objections, yet we still insist that they are of such weight as to render the votes of Kilrie and Colin Simpson, Sir James Holburn and his son, null and void, according to these laws. And considering that, by the principles and constitutions of this Church, particularly the Directory

1649, persons malignant or disaffected are to have no hand in the election of a minister, the objections offered against the Earl of Moray and Sir John Henderson, as not of the Communion of this Church, and the two Balrams, as seldom hearing Presbyterian ministers, are of sufficient weight to deprive them of a vote, though the Rev. Synod decline to determine thereanent. Upon which grounds, eight of the pretended voters in Mr. Liston's call should, in justice, be laid aside; and then only six Heritors and Elders vote for him, against some of which there were also weighty objections offered—though we do not insist upon them—with seventeen heads of families consenting, and these none of the best, as we are credibly informed. Whereas, Mr. Kay's call is subscribed by nine Elders, one Heritor, and a great number of heads of families, of which upwards of twenty are said to be Feuars, who subscribed in presence of the ministers appointed by the Synod to moderate in the call. And whereas it was alleged, while we were reasoning against Mr. Liston's call, that we had concurred with the Synod in the settlement of a minister in the parish of Forgan, upon a call by the Heritors and Elders, while the major part of the Congregation were for another, we must represent that the affair of Forgan is vastly different; for the call sustained to the parish of Forgan had the eldership, which is wanting here; and there was no such disproportion between the heads of families consenting to that and the competing call, as in the present case. Though it wanted the greater, yet the Synod were credibly informed the better part of that parish were cordial for it; yea we were told there was scarcely a praying person in that Congregation who was not desirous of that settlement.

'4*to.* Although we have all due respect to the Right Honourable the Earl of Morton, and a grateful sense of what favours he has done this Church, and could heartily have wished, and some of us have endeavoured, as we had access, that the eldership and people should have cordially

concurred with his Lordship, in calling Mr. Liston; yet, considering that as the Earl did, at first, insist to have him settled upon his presentation, before there was any appearance of a call from that parish, which the Rev. Presbytery of Dunfermline did justly refuse, as not agreeable to Presbyterian principles; so, ever since this affair seems to be put on a new footing by the Synod, his Lordship still insists upon his right of presentation, protesting that his subscribing the call should not invalidate his presentation, nor be construed as receding therefrom. And the Synod having now noted the approbation of that call, and ordered Mr. Liston's settlement thereon, notwithstanding the weighty objections offered against it, and the opposition of the eldership and body of that Congregation, we fear the deed of the Synod, though not so intended by them, may be interpreted an homologation of the usurped powers of patrons, or may prove a dangerous precedent, for countenancing those Heritors and others who may incline to invade the rights and liberties of this Church, and obtrude ministers on Christian Congregations without their call, yea against their mind, in direct opposition to the Word of God, our Books of Discipline, and standing Acts of the General Assembly. And considering that ministers of the Gospel and Church judicatories are bound by many sacred ties to maintain and defend the rights and liberties of Christian Churches, and of Christian Congregations, and that we are under strong apprehension of the bad consequences of this sentence, not only in the parish of Aberdour, but elsewhere: Therefore we now beg leave hereby to protest that we are not chargeable with these, and that this sentence shall not be pleaded, nor improven as a precedent, in time coming.

MR. WILLIAM MONCRIEFF, at Largo.
MR. G. GILLESPIE.
MR. EBENEZER ERSKINE, etc."[1]

[1] Some of the words in the above paper have had the spelling adapted to the modern standard.

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ERRATA.

Page 22, line 5, *for* Balburton *read* Balbarton.
,, 118, line 30, *for* AUCHERTOOL *read* AUCHTERTOOL.

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From Medieval Latin

proficuum: profit
imposterum: hereafter
mercimonium: trade

From Gazetteer of Scotland art. Dornoch-
-ties.

"long the property of the abbots of Inchcolm, it was granted along with the other possessions of that abbey to Sir James Stuart Lord Doune, whose son and name-sake, the 'Bonny Earl of Moray' was slain here."